

The Contribution of Pro-Poor Growth Programmes to Poverty Reduction in Rwanda.

A case study of the Girinka Programme in Rural Rwanda.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the contribution of the Girinka Programme, a pro-poor growth programme in Rwanda, to poverty reduction. Recent studies have placed increasing emphasis on the contribution of pro-poor growth to poverty reduction and have argued that pro-poor growth has the potential to reduce poverty more effectively than economic growth. Poverty, for this study, is measured based on the following indicators of poverty derived from the United Nations (1998) definition of poverty: nutrition, access to health care services, access to water, education, and access to credit. Income or the lack thereof, is not the sole determinant of poverty, and is not “the sum total of human life” (United Nations Development Programme, 1990), therefore relying solely on quantitative measurements of poverty that are based on income can paint an incomplete picture of the reality on the ground. Therefore, since poverty is multidimensional, this study uses a multidimensional approach to its analysis and goes beyond the quantitative aspects of poverty.

Qualitative research methods were used for this study, and fieldwork was conducted in Kayanza District, located in the Eastern Province of Rwanda. In-depth interviews were held with beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of the Girinka Programme in order to determine the programme’s contribution to a meaningful reduction in poverty. In addition, interviews were held with Girinka local and national programme officials. Secondary data in the form of programme documents was also collected, reviewed and analysed.

The findings of this study indicated that overall, the programme significantly and positively contributed to an improvement in the quality of life of its beneficiaries through a meaningful reduction in poverty, improved nutrition and better health, increased access to education, as well as increased access to credit. However, this study also found a number of major weaknesses that are an obstacle to an increase in the programme’s poverty reducing impact and its overall effectiveness, such as a lack of programme monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AUC	African Union Commission
CFSVANS	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis and Nutrition Survey
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoR	Government of Rwanda
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture Rwanda
NISR	National Institute of Statistics Rwanda
OAU/AU	Organization of African Union/African Union
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RAB	Rwanda Agricultural Board
RWF	Rwandan Franc
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This study set out to examine if and how pro-poor poverty reduction programmes in Rwanda are contributing to a meaningful reduction in poverty. In 2006, the Rwandan government initiated a nationwide home-grown programme known as the Girinka Programme (also known as the One Cow per Poor Family Programme), in response to high rates of malnutrition and as a means to accelerate the reduction of household level poverty and increase agricultural productivity. Through this programme, the Rwandan government provides one pregnant heifer to a poor family in Rwanda provided they meet all necessary criteria. The Girinka programme was inspired by and is deeply rooted in Rwanda's culture. It is based on the premise that providing a cow to a poor family has multiple benefits to not only the recipients of the cow, but to their community and the nation at large. Rwanda's economy has been growing steadily during the last decade and in 2012 it grew at 8%, claiming the title of the fastest growing economy in the East African Community for a third year in a row (The World Bank, 2013). In 2013, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) reported that one million Rwandans exited poverty in the year 2012, and that the percentage of Rwandans living in poverty lessened from 56.7% in 2005/06 to 44.9% in 2010/11 (Government of Rwanda (GoR), 2013). Although the Girinka programme has had a positive impact on the reduction of poverty and the improvement of livelihoods among the poorest in Rwanda (Rwandapedia, 2013), and although quantitative data, as shown above, informs us that poverty is on the decline, further data shows that poverty and chronic malnutrition remain a critical issue for the nation¹. Rwanda holds one of the highest rates of malnutrition in East Africa with 43% of children under 5 chronically malnourished, and 21.9% of child mortalities resulting from under-nutrition related causes (Ministry of Agriculture Rwanda (MINAGRI), National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (NISR), and World Food Programme (WFP), 2012). It has been found that the main cause of malnutrition and under-nutrition in Rwanda is household level poverty (ibid). And so, while it is quantitatively apparent that poverty is reducing in Rwanda, there is limited information on whether this statistical reduction in poverty is accompanied by a real improvement in the quality of life of the individual and/or household especially considering the fact that existing data shows that household level poverty is persistent. Six years after the introduction of the Girinka Programme, malnutrition and household level poverty remain a great challenge for the GoR. How effective, therefore, is a pro-poor growth programme like Girinka in the reduction of poverty? This study set out to qualitatively examine the contribution of

¹ Rwandapedia is a Rwandan digital archive of information related to Rwanda's development as well as its culture and history. It is operated and managed by the GoR, and houses government reports and data on developmental and poverty reduction programmes and policies. It is funded by the African Development Bank. It has no link to Wikipedia.

Girinka to the reduction of poverty in Rwanda based on the following indicators of poverty: nutrition, access to health care, education, access to clean water, and access to credit. The research for this study was done in Kayonza District, located in the Eastern Province of Rwanda, approximately 75 kilometres east of the capital city, Kigali.

1.1 Background

Rwanda is a landlocked country located in East-Central Africa and has a population of 11.78 million (The World Bank, 2013). The Rwandan genocide of 1994 led to the loss of over one million people in 100 days, destroying Rwanda's human and physical capital, leaving the country with a shattered people and a shattered economy. Twenty years later, Rwanda is the fastest growing economy in the East African Community and has been ranked second among the top ten global reformers, and the top improver in Sub-Saharan Africa since 2005 (The World Bank and International Finance Corporation, 2013). The sharpest reduction in poverty in Rwanda occurred between 2005/6 and 2010/11, when poverty went down by 11.8% (Hernandez and Niyibizi, 2013), one of the highest reductions in Rwanda's economic history. Increased agricultural productivity, particularly at household level, was one of the main contributors to poverty reduction in the past decade, leading to increased standards of living, and increased household consumption per adult, especially for the poor and extreme poor (ibid). Among the reasons for this increase in agricultural productivity at the household and national level are pro-poor, social protection programmes like Girinka. Recent studies have placed emphasis on the contribution of pro-poor growth to the reduction of poverty, and argue that pro-poor growth has the potential to reduce poverty more rapidly than "reliance on the trickle-down effect" of economic growth (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000). The translation of pro-poor growth to poverty reduction is thus faster than the translation of economic growth to poverty reduction. Furthermore, in the context of poverty reduction through macroeconomic efforts, "programs targeted directly to the poor can target a reasonable number of people and play an important complementary role" in the reduction of poverty (Mellor, 1999). Some studies have also shown that agriculture is a fundamental pre-requisite for widespread poverty reduction (Dorward et al., 2003). From this, one can safely presume that a programme like Girinka which is both pro-poor and agricultural is a winning formula for reducing poverty. As a poverty reduction strategy, the Girinka Programme is not only well-suited for the Rwandan context, considering that an estimated 80% of its population relies on agriculture as a primary means of living (Bizimana et al., 2012), as a pro-poor programme it also has the innate potential to reduce poverty levels nationwide.

However, despite Rwanda's positive economic progress and achievements in poverty reduction, it still remains one of the world's poorest countries and continues to struggle with a host of socioeconomic issues such as extreme poverty, malnutrition and unemployment. According to the 2012 report on The Evolution of Poverty in Rwanda, 44.9% of the Rwandan population is still considered poor and 24% is considered extremely poor (NISR, 2012a). This poverty analysis is based on a national poverty line of 118 000 RWF (174 USD) per adult per year, and an extreme poverty line of 83 000 RWF (122 USD) per adult per year (ibid). It is as a result of these urgent issues that the Rwandan government has taken a relatively unconventional route towards development and poverty reduction that includes creating and developing home-grown, pro-poor programmes that draw from and capitalize on Rwanda's culture and innate capabilities. The Rwandan government has adapted a context-specific approach to poverty reduction, applying solutions that are compatible to the problems at hand. Home-grown solutions and programmes such as Girinka have been said to be the bedrock of the nation's success (GoR, 2013). In light of the 50th Anniversary of the OAU/AU in 2013, the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the African Development Bank and the United Nations Commission for Africa established the Agenda 2063 project, which is a 50 year plan for Africa's development or what has been called "Africa's own Millennium Development Goals" (African Union Commission (AUC), 2013). This agenda is based on the principle of self-reliant development and places an increasingly sharp emphasis on home-grown solutions for Africa. The Agenda 2063 framework encourages Africa "to take advantage of the failure of opposing externally inspired paradigms (socialist planning and the neo-liberal Washington consensus) to promote a new approach to development planning, firmly embedded in its own experience, culture, capabilities and institutions" (ibid). This is the road that Rwanda has been on for the last decade and the Girinka Programme is just one example of this development approach. Programmes like Girinka have characterised and continue to characterise Rwanda's poverty reduction agenda.

It is apparent that Rwanda has experienced significant economic growth and a notable reduction in poverty, based on the number of citizens no longer living below the poverty line. However, graduating from below the poverty line to above it does not necessarily imply an improvement in standard of living or a betterment of human well-being, and this brings into question whether or not people are actually less poor simply because they no longer quantitatively qualify as so.

1.2 Problem Statement

In 2006, 51% of Rwanda's population was chronically malnourished and this was one of the highest chronic malnutrition rates in the region (MINAGRI, NISR, and WFP, 2012). The Girinka Programme

was established to reduce high rates of malnutrition in Rwanda as well as simultaneously reduce poverty, improve livelihoods and increase agricultural productivity. As mentioned in Section 1.1, one million Rwandans graduated from poverty between 2009 and 2012 (GoR, 2013) and increased agricultural productivity was one of the main contributors to this household level reduction in poverty and was also responsible for the bulk of national poverty reduction in 2011 (Hernandez and Niyibizi, 2013). Agricultural productivity at household level more than doubled in the last 10 years (ibid) and the Girinka Programme is said to have played a major role in this increase (Rwandapedia, 2013). However, despite the increase in agricultural productivity and the reduction of poverty, chronic malnutrition remains at a disturbingly high rate. Forty-three percent of Rwandan children under the age of 5 are chronically malnourished according to Rwanda's 2012 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis and Nutrition Survey (CFSVANS), and this remains one of the highest chronic malnutrition rates in the East African region (MINAGRI, NISR, and WFP, 2012). Recently, the 2012 Cost of Hunger in Rwanda Report revealed that in 2012, the Rwandan government lost an estimated RWF 503.6 billion (11.5% of the country's GDP), as a result of child under-nutrition and related illnesses (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) et al., 2014). According to the report, under-nutrition was responsible for 21.9% of all child mortalities and an "estimated 922 million working hours were lost in 2012 due to absenteeism from the workforce as a result of nutrition-related mortalities" (ibid). This is equivalent to RWF 309 billion, which is 7.1% of the country's GDP (ibid). The CFSVANS states that household level poverty (measured by the wealth index), is the underlying cause of chronic malnutrition in Rwanda (MINAGRI, NISR, and WFP, 2012). The wealth index is a "composite measure of a household's cumulative living standard and is calculated using data on a household's ownership of selected assets" (MINAGRI, NISR, and WFP, 2012), as opposed to the traditional measure of poverty based only on income or a given poverty line. The Cost of Hunger in Rwanda Report also states that poverty is one the main factors associated with under-nutrition (UNECA et al., 2014). Therefore, if, as suggested above, chronic malnutrition in Rwanda is a result of household level poverty, one can argue that the majority of Rwandans who are assumed to be graduating from poverty are in actuality simply crossing the poverty line while in reality there has been no real difference in their livelihood or standard of living. I therefore find this quantitative form of measurement problematic, because someone earning 175 USD a year would not be considered poor as per this measurement, while in practicality a one dollar increase in one's income may not result in any improvement in their livelihood or wellbeing. This study attempts to fit into this gap by examining how, if at all, the Girinka Programme is contributing to a meaningful reduction in poverty.

1.3 Central Research Question

This study set out to investigate the following question: How is the Girinka Programme contributing to a meaningful reduction in poverty in the lives of its beneficiaries? In order to answer this central research question, the following sub-questions needed to be answered:

1. How, according to the definition of poverty used for this study, were beneficiaries living prior to receiving a cow?
2. According to the definition of poverty used for this study, how are they living now (at the time the study was conducted)?
3. What do prospective beneficiaries hope to gain as a result of receiving a cow through the Girinka Programme?

1.4 Motivation

While quantitative data tells us that the Rwandan economy and the poor in Rwanda are doing better each year, quantitative data does not paint a full picture in regard to how the individual Rwandan is truly benefiting from this economic growth and it does not tell us how their lives, and not just their incomes, have changed. As much as quantitative data and income figures are extremely useful, we know that as Mahbub Ul Haq wrote in the first UNDP Human Development Report in 1990, “income is not the sum total of human life” (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1990) and there are many other factors that determine the wellbeing of an individual besides income. Moreover, pro-poor growth is said to have the potential to reduce poverty faster and more directly than non-poor growth (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000), and while in Rwanda data shows quantitative reductions in poverty, additional data shows a stagnation of household level poverty which leads to persistent malnutrition, among other issues. These contradictions may be as a result of methodological and/or conceptual differences in the analysis of poverty in Rwanda. Poverty reduction should be about a holistic improvement in wellbeing as opposed to merely an increase in income. This study was therefore motivated by the fact that as a Rwandan, I was interested in whether these drastic reductions in poverty that quantitative data suggests Rwanda is experiencing, are translating into a true improvement in the wellbeing of its people. Results from a study such as this can be useful in evaluating the impact of such programmes on their beneficiaries, and in so doing, can potentially provide policy makers with real life, first-hand information that is imperative in the enrichment and effectiveness of policies and programmes targeted at the poor, such as Girinka.

1.5 Key Terms

1.5.1 Poverty

The following United Nations definition of poverty was used for this study:

Fundamentally, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation (United Nations, 1998).

This multidimensional conceptualization of poverty was firmly embedded in the ideas of Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq, who developed the concept of human development which the United Nations (UN) and its agencies, principally the UNDP, adopted to inform their conceptualization of poverty. Sen and ul Haq, in their own rights, heavily influenced the evolution of the conceptualization of poverty and significantly contributed to shifting the focus of poverty away from exclusively income to a broader conceptualization that includes principles of capabilities and functionings, which incorporate some of the indicators in the definition above. I opted to use this definition of poverty because its multidimensionality allows me to look beyond the quantitative aspects of poverty, which is the premise of this study. This definition also covers the basic human needs necessary for survival such as food and water, making for a comprehensive and universally applicable conceptualization of poverty.

1.5.2 Household

A household for this study is defined as "all the people who occupy a housing unit" (United States Census Bureau, 2013). This definition includes "related family members and unrelated people", so long as they occupy one housing unit (ibid).

1.5.3 Livestock

For this study, livestock is understood to mean farm animals, such as cattle, which are also regarded as assets.

1.6 The Girinka Programme (One Cow per Poor Family Programme)

The Girinka Programme was initiated and launched by Rwandan President Paul Kagame in 2006 in response to high rates of child malnutrition and as a mechanism towards accelerating the reduction of rural poverty and promoting increased agricultural productivity (Rwanda Agricultural Board, n.d). This nationwide programme is based on the principle that providing a cow to poor households helps to improve their livelihood through improved nutrition from the milk produced by the cow, increased agricultural output through better soil fertility as a result of organic manure, as well as increased income derived from the commercialisation of dairy products (Rwandapedia, 2013). A cow must be at least three months pregnant before it is given to a poor family. Girinka can be loosely translated to simply mean ‘may you have a cow’, but this has a much deeper traditional meaning in Rwandan culture. A cow is a symbol of Rwandan culture and it symbolises wealth, good health, pride, and gratitude, so if one is to say to you: “may you have a cow”, they are in essence blessing you and wishing for you good health and wealth. A cow is perceived to be a symbol and a source of wealth not only because of its place in Rwandan culture, but also due to the fact that as an asset, it has the potential to generate income. In Rwandan culture, the more cows you have, the richer you are assumed to be, and the more respected you are among society. Cows are offered as dowry at weddings, and are offered as a symbol of camaraderie. Additionally, in Rwandan culture, ownership of a cow means security and status (Crisafulli and Redmond, 2012). The Girinka Programme is not only culturally significant in the Rwandan context, but as a pro-poor approach to poverty reduction, it also fits well in the broader theoretical context of pro-poor growth and poverty reduction. Furthermore, because the Girinka Programme provides poor families with a pregnant cow, it acts as a synergetic satisfier: improving nutrition and livelihood for families, increasing crop productivity, restoring dignity and pride, as well as promoting unity and reconciliation through the “pass on a cow” initiative, while at the same time promoting self-reliant and self-sustainable citizens.

To be eligible to receive a cow one must not already own cattle, must be considered poor by his/her community, have no other source of income, and must have between 0.25 - 0.75 hectares of land or at the least have access to a common land where they can graze a cow (MINAGRI, n.d). Additionally, households must have a basic cowshed with the capacity to house and feed a cow by the time they receive their cow. Households who do not have the required cow shed are permitted to join with other community members to build a common cowshed which they can jointly utilise, and they can then become eligible to receive a cow through the Girinka Programme (Kagabo, personal interview,

2014 June 20)². Households who live in villages where the local government has constructed a communal cowshed for them are exempted from the cowshed requirement, provided they meet all other criteria. The selection process is done at a local level whereby local community members, under the observation and guidance of community leaders, meet and decide for themselves, based on the criteria above, who among them fits the criteria and should benefit from this programme (ibid). This selection process is facilitated by a local leader who takes note of the proposed beneficiaries and takes this to the sector and district level for final selection and approval. Once beneficiaries are selected and approved, but prior to receiving the cows, beneficiaries undergo an intensive training program executed by the Rwanda Agricultural Board (RAB) together with local district veterinarians and district officials on basic animal husbandry knowledge and practices (ibid). Their training is divided into five main pillars: nutrition for the cows, cowshed maintenance, disease control, reproduction and breeding, and record keeping (ibid). Beneficiaries are trained intensively on these 5 pillars so as to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to maximize on the productivity of their cow and to enable them to keep their cows' healthy. Upon the completion of the training, the official handover ceremony takes place and beneficiaries are given a pregnant cow free of charge as well as a free start-up package which includes a one-year supply of basic drug accompaniments (ibid).

This programme has already distributed over 196, 000 cows to poor rural families in the country and this number only includes direct beneficiaries of the cow, excluding recipients of the 'pass on a cow' initiative (Kagabo, personal interview, 2014 June 20). The programme's target is to have reached 350,000 households by 2017 (ibid). Girinka is providing poor Rwandans with the physical capital, the human capital (through improved nutrition), the natural capital (through improved soil fertility from organic manure), and the financial capital (through the sales of surplus dairy products) necessary for them to meet their basic minimum needs, and in so doing, enjoy a better standard of living than they did prior to receiving a cow. Whether or not these forms of capital are productive and effective in bringing about a significant reduction to poverty in Rwanda, is what this study set out to determine.

² Andrew Kagabo is the National Director of the Girinka Programme.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Poverty in Rwanda

“The poverty line in Rwanda is defined as a minimum food consumption basket that offers the required number of calories for a Rwandan adult involved in physically demanding work” (Hernandez and Niyibizi, 2013). The cost of this minimum food basket determines the food poverty line, and “people living in households with per adult expenditures below this amount” are considered extremely poor (ibid). The cost of the minimum food basket plus an allowance for basic non-food consumption determines the overall poverty line and households living below this line are considered poor (ibid). This is the method widely used for the measurement of poverty in Rwanda.

The three other methods of measuring poverty in Rwanda, although less commonly used, are the Monetary Measurement of Poverty, Subjective Measurement of Poverty, and Non-Monetary Measurement of Poverty. The monetary measurement of poverty is income based and uses data “collected from households relating to income or expenditure” (NISR, 2014). The subjective measurement of poverty is based on the “perception that individuals or households have on their socio-economic situation” and the non-monetary measurement of poverty is based on deprivation and “the lack of access to certain goods and services considered necessary for every human being” (ibid). The overall level of non-monetary poverty in Rwanda in 2012 was 37% (ibid).

The World Bank’s Economic Update Report on Rwanda reported that over the past 10 years, “household consumption per adult equivalent grew at 2.5 percent per annum, and was stronger for the poor than for the non-poor”, leading to decreased inequality (Hernandez and Niyibizi, 2013). These findings were consistent with those in the Evolution of Poverty in Rwanda report by the NISR, which reported that over the last five years (2007 - 2012) economic growth has been accompanied by a fall in poverty and inequality (NISR, 2012a). The Gini coefficient fell, nationally, from 0.52 in 2005/06 to 0.49 in 2010/11 (ibid). It was found that the main factors leading to poverty reduction in Rwanda include economic growth, which led to the “substantial creation of jobs”, increased agricultural production, and the commercialisation of agriculture (ibid). Agricultural output on average increased from 18% in 2005/06 to 25% in 2010/11 (ibid). These findings are consistent with findings by Hernandez and Niyibizi (2013) who state that increased agricultural productivity, particularly at household level, was one of the main contributors to poverty reduction in the past decade, leading to increased standards of living, and increased household consumption per adult, especially for the poor and extreme poor. It was also shown that as a result of pro-poor growth

strategies, inequality slightly reduced (Hernandez and Niyibizi, 2013). However, despite apparent economic growth and its relation to a reduction in poverty, poverty was found to be “relatively irresponsive to growth” leading to a growth-elasticity of poverty of -0.82 “which compares poorly with an estimated average global elasticity of -2” (ibid). “The growth elasticity of poverty measures the percentage change in poverty headcount for each percentage change in consumption” (ibid).

2.2 The Conceptualization and Evolution of Poverty

Recent studies have placed increasing emphasis on the contribution of pro-poor growth to poverty reduction and have argued that pro-poor growth policies and programs, such as the Girinka Programme, can reduce poverty more rapidly than “reliance on the trickle-down effect” of economic growth (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000). On the contrary, there are numerous studies which have for a long time, held the view that economic growth is the fastest most efficient route towards poverty reduction, and have gone on to show that in many regions of the world, rapid growth “has been systematically associated with sharp declines in absolute poverty” (Dollar, Kleineberg, and Kraay, 2013). This chapter analyses these two schools of thought and examines the theoretical foundation of the Girinka Programme as a pro-poor approach to poverty reduction, and the role of livestock in poverty reduction.

First and foremost, it is important to understand how the conceptualization of poverty has evolved with time, in order to understand the relevant approaches and policies aimed at its reduction. For decades, poverty was conceptualized in absolute terms, which is based on a minimum amount of money necessary to meet basic human needs such as food, clothing and shelter. The benchmark for this measurement is the poverty line, which according to The World Bank, is the income level below which people are defined as poor (The World Bank, 2013). Over time, the conceptualization of poverty has evolved. Various scholars have defined and conceptualized poverty from an absolute perspective, a relative perspective, a deprivation perspective, a capabilities perspective, and a combination of some or all of the above. The poverty line is based on the income level people require to buy life’s basic necessities such as food, clothing, and housing, together with the income level people require to satisfy their most important sociocultural needs (The World Bank, 2013). The poverty line has for long been used as a benchmark for the measurement of poverty worldwide, and whilst millions have crossed this line, leaving poverty behind, poverty remains prevalent and persistent, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. The current poverty line is \$1.25 a day. As explained by Foster (1998), an absolute poverty line is a fixed (group-specific) cut-off level that is applied across all potential resource distributions, and in comparisons over time, for example, the standard is

unchanged even in the face of economic growth, although provisions are made for changes in price levels. Absolute poverty “exists independently of any reference group and does not depend on the general living standards of the society in which it is conceived” (Noble, Ratcliffe, and Wright, 2004). While the poverty line bears many significant purposes such as facilitating the measurement of poverty, it has become increasingly apparent that poverty is not solely about income, or the lack thereof. Poverty is both multidimensional and highly dependent on one’s locality and/or social setting. To set a global poverty level is to discount the cultural and socio-economic differences that exist between societies and to discount the fact that what one society requires for survival can be vastly different from that of another. It was as a result of this new wave of thinking that the conceptualization of poverty began to evolve into a more relative notion, which took into account differences in societies. Relative poverty is poverty that is dependent on the needs of the society in question. As defined by Townsend (1979):

Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged, or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities.

Absolute and relative poverty have been and continue to be the two main pillars in the conceptualization of poverty. Sen asks the following question: “should poverty be estimated with a cut-off line that reflects a level below which people are – in some sense- ‘absolutely impoverished’, or a level that reflects standards of living ‘common to that country’ in particular?” (1983). The answer, according to Sen, is yes for both. Poverty is not, and cannot be, “altogether relative” (ibid). Poverty is primarily an absolute notion in that it contains an “irreducible absolutist core” and one basic example of this absolutist core is hunger. Hunger is hunger, regardless of the “relative picture”, and where there is hunger there is poverty (ibid). Poverty according to Sen is the deprivation of basic capabilities more than it is a deprivation of income (1999). Capability simply refers to what we are capable of achieving (what an individual is able to do and be). In the space of capabilities, Sen argues that poverty is absolute. However, in the space of commodities or characteristics, poverty takes on a relative form (Sen, 1983). “Absolute deprivation in terms of a person’s capabilities relates to a relative deprivation in terms of commodities, incomes and resources” (ibid). Deprivations can be “loosely regarded as unsatisfactory and undesirable circumstances, whether material, emotional, physical or behavioural, as recognised by a fair degree of societal consensus” (Gordon, 2003).

In May 1998, The UN incorporated and built on some of these dominant theories of poverty to create a more comprehensive definition of poverty that still takes into consideration the ability to afford basic human necessities, but also places an emphasis on non-monetary necessities such as freedom, dignity, security and social inclusion. This UN definition, also used for this study, considers poverty a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity, the basic inability to participate in society, and one's susceptibility to violence, to mention only a few (UN, 1998). Poverty, according to this definition, is more than just low income or its relativity. If one has the sufficient income necessary to meet their basic needs, but is unable to use this income due to insecurity, for instance, that individual can still be considered poor. Therefore, since income is not the sole indicator of poverty, an increase in income in itself does not and should not imply a reduction of poverty.

2.3 Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction

The evolution of the conceptualization of poverty has been accompanied by the evolution of approaches to poverty reduction. In the 1950s and 60s, economic growth was perceived to be the primary approach to rapidly reducing poverty and improving quality of life (The World Bank, 1990), and as a result, increased emphasis was placed on economic growth, especially in the developing world. This approach was partly informed by the trickle-down theory which implies "a vertical flow from the rich to the poor" in which the poor benefit only indirectly (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000). This theory states that benefits from economic policies which favour big businesses and the wealthy in general, will eventually trickle down to the poor through job creation, subsequent increased demand and an eventual thriving economy. It has been shown that countries which have experienced sustained economic growth have also experienced greater reductions in poverty (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son 2000). Furthermore, no country in the world "has successfully reduced poverty in a non-growth environment" (Eggenberger-Argote, 2005). The global incidence of poverty fell from 52% in 1980 to 42% in 1990 to 21% in 2010, and this sustained reduction in poverty, according to Dollar, Kleineberg, and Kraay (2013), is largely as a result of rapid economic growth. In a study done by Dollar, Kleineberg, and Kraay (ibid), using a data-set of 118 countries spanning over 40 years, results showed that "incomes of the bottom 20% and bottom 40% of the income distribution generally rise equiproportionately with mean incomes as economic growth proceeds". Their study concludes that economic growth is good for the poor and attributes the poverty reduction experienced in the developing world in the past decades to economic growth. This confirms their initial theory that income of the poor rises one-for-one with overall growth (Dollar and Kraay, 2000). Gallup, Radelet

and Warner (1998) also found an empirical one-for-one relationship between economic growth and poverty reduction and concluded that “on average across countries, one percent higher *growth* in average income corresponds to one percent higher growth of income of the poor, both in the long term and in the short term”. Roemer and Gugerty (1997) support this finding in a study that uses a database compiled by Klaus Deininger and Lyn Squire of The World Bank, which covered 58 countries beginning in 1960, and contained comprehensive data on income distribution across those 58 countries. Twenty-six of the 58 countries in the dataset were developing countries. The aim of Roemer and Gugerty’s study “was to measure the growth of average income for both the poorest 20% and the poorest 40% of the population and then to compare these to the growth of GDP per capita” (ibid). Results showed that an increase in the rate of GDP per capita translated into a one-for-one increase in average income of the poorest 40%. A GDP growth rate of 10% per year was found to be associated with a 10% increase in income for the poorest 40% of the population studied (ibid). Empirical data has also shown that in Asia, the incidence of poverty decreased following the acceleration of growth in the 1980s and early 1990s and then increased with a deceleration of growth which was a result of the 1997 financial crisis (Eggenberger-Argote, 2005). This demonstrates the sensitivity of poverty to economic growth. In a study done to explore the relationship between economic growth and poverty with specific application to Ivory Coast, Kakwani (1993) found that poverty can decrease faster than economic growth provided that there is no increase in inequality during the course of economic growth. Based on these studies, one can agree that there is indeed a causal relationship between economic growth and poverty reduction and that benefits of economic growth can indeed trickle down to the poor, even though it may be in lesser proportion (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000) and even though it may take long periods of time. Proponents of this argument are therefore more strongly in favor of growth enhancing policies and programs and tend to discourage governments from pursuing pro-poor growth policies and instead encourage them to focus on policies that maximize growth given that they avoid inflation and maintain fiscal discipline (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000). Proponents of this argument believe that due to the favorable impact of economic growth on the incidence of poverty, maximizing economic growth is the fastest way to achieve a rapid reduction in poverty and the “justification for additional social policies is unclear” (Székely, 2001).

2.4 Pro-Poor Growth and Poverty Reduction

While there has been evidence on the positive connection between economic growth and poverty reduction, and while it is evident that economic growth is a necessary prerequisite for poverty reduction, studies show that it is not a sufficient one (Eggenberger-Argote, 2005). The causal relationship between economic growth and poverty reduction does not necessarily imply that maximizing the rate of growth will naturally maximize the rate of poverty reduction (Osmani, 2000). Mexico and Chile are suitable examples for this argument. Despite a 9.7% increase in GDP per capita between 1996 and 1998, Mexico experienced almost no decline in poverty, and while it can be argued that the 2 year period is too short for one to see any significant difference in poverty levels, incomes of the poorest 30% of its population contracted (Székely, 2001). “The huge increase in mean income was due entirely to income gains among the richest 30 percent, particularly the richest 10 percent, of the population” (ibid). In Chile, between 1992 and 1996, the nation’s GDP per capita grew by more than 30% in real terms. During this period, “moderate poverty registered a substantial decline from 20 to 16 percent”, and income inequality increased, with the Gini index rising by 7% (ibid). Székely (2001) argues that had there been no increase in inequality, in other words had income distribution remained the same as it was in 1992, poverty would have decreased further to 10% as opposed to 16%. This is not a scenario unique to just Latin America, however. Studies have shown that in many countries, the incidence of poverty has persisted despite “decent” growth rates (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000), indicating that although economic growth has the potential to rapidly reduce poverty, it also has the potential to delay the reduction of poverty and sometimes even increase poverty. Kakwani et al. (2000) explain that while economic growth increases average incomes, it can also increase inequality, widening the gaps between the rich and the poor, which means that the proportional benefits of growth received by the poor are less than those received by the non-poor. High economic growth can lead to the increase of poverty when “inequality increases so much that the beneficial impact of growth is more than offset by the adverse impact of rising inequality” (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000). This is why, in the case of Mexico, we saw the richest 30% and 10% of the population representing the majority of the increase in mean incomes but no real decline in poverty. The trickle-down effect in this case, was not “in effect” and this may support studies that claim that the trickle-down theory has in many cases proven weak and unreliable (Eggenberger-Argote, 2005). When inequality increases with economic growth, poverty reduction is slower and in rare cases may be overpowered by the inequality created by growth (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000). The latter is less likely to occur. The most common case is that the poor will benefit from economic growth, but they will only do so to a lesser extent than the non-poor

(Kakwani and Pernia, 2000) and at a later time, which contributes further to inequality. Contrary to studies that have found that in some cases, a decrease in the incidence of poverty is possible even if growth is accompanied by an increase in inequality (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000) and that inequality actually decreases with growth (Ravallion and Chen, 1997), some studies have shown that economic growth has the potential to harm the poor and that increases in inequality are not conducive to the reduction of poverty. Economic growth, according to Bhagwati (1988), can be a disturbingly uneven process and can bypass the poor and in some instances even harm them. Bhagwati (ibid) succinctly displays the potential spill over effects of economic growth: “the pious know that affluence can impoverish one’s soul; the economist need not be surprised that it can impoverish one’s neighbours too”. How poverty responds to economic growth is highly dependent on what happens to inequality (Osmani, 2000). If inequality rises rapidly with a rapid rise in growth then there will be a slower reduction in poverty and if inequality does not rise, faster growth will lead to a faster reduction in poverty (ibid). However, if inequality rises modestly in relation to growth, then faster economic growth will still be able to lead to faster poverty reduction (ibid).

It is also argued however, that economic growth, if not inclusive, “benefits the rich proportionally more than the poor...because the rich have inherent advantages (e.g., human and material)” and so, in order to promote effective and real reductions in poverty, governments need to pursue and adopt policies, specifically pro-poor policies, that are aimed at reducing this gap (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000). Inclusive economic growth is economic growth whose “outcome should be that no person in society is deprived of the minimum basic capabilities” (ibid) such as access to basic adequate nourishment and the right to live a healthy, safe, secure and satisfying life (ibid). Exclusive economic growth has the highest potential to create inequality and is significantly more likely to lead to an increase in the incidence of poverty. This and the persistency of poverty around the world despite varying degrees of economic growth, has led many to question the effectiveness of economic growth (Roemer and Gugerty, 1997) in reducing poverty and as a result, there has been a shift in focus away from the theory that economic growth is the main engine of poverty reduction, towards a more pro-poor growth strategy (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000). This realisation and shift in focus has “generated keen interest in the concept of pro-poor growth (ibid)”. It has been shown that pro-poor growth reduces poverty faster than non-pro-poor growth (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000). It is therefore essential for governments to adopt and implement pro-poor policies and programs that will “offset and outweigh” the inequality and/or bias that markets may create during the process of economic growth (Baghwati, 1988). Pro-poor growth is inclusive growth that “enables the poor to actively participate in and significantly benefit from economic activity” (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000).

The 1990 World Development Report stated that in order to achieve successful reductions in poverty, countries must put in place policies that provide opportunities for the poor and enable them to participate in economic growth (The World Bank, 1990). The report provides two main ways in which governments can do this: one is to adopt and implement policies that encourage rural development and urban employment, and secondly, to promote participation of the poor by increasing their access to land, credit, services, and public infrastructure (ibid). Promoting pro-poor growth policies that benefit the poor proportionally more than or at least equally to the rich rapidly reduces the incidence of poverty and provides resources for the poor to meet their basic minimum needs (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000). The pro-poor approach to poverty reduction is a departure from the trickle-down development approach and is characterised by the absorption of labour “accompanied by policies and programs that moderate inequalities and facilitate income and employment generation for the poor” (ibid).

As we can see, there is convincing evidence on the efficacy of pro-poor growth in the reduction of poverty, but it is important to note that some empirical studies have found that the success of poverty reduction with growth depends on two important factors: initial inequality and changing income distributions (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000; Ravallion, 2004). Cross-country comparison of rates of poverty reduction found that the higher the initial inequality of income in a country, the less the gains of growth are shared by the poor (Ravallion, 2004). According to Deininger and Squire (1998) as quoted by Kakwani, Prakash, and Son (2000), “initial inequality hurts mainly the poor but not the rich”. As a result, countries with initial inequality will need unusually high growth rates to achieve rapid poverty reduction (Ravallion, 2004). Initial inequality is also very important in explaining differences in the rates of poverty reduction in different countries (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000) and this can explain why matching growth rates in two countries may lead to different rates of poverty reduction. Changing income distribution is the second factor influencing the rate of poverty reduction at a given growth rate (Ravallion, 2004). According to Ravallion, the geographical and sectorial pattern of growth is important in determining the rate of aggregate poverty reduction, especially considering the fact that in many countries there is often a concentration of poor people in specific regions and sectors (ibid). Therefore, the degree to which growth favours the rural sector is crucial to its impact on growth (ibid). In Thailand, regional and aggregate inequality was shown to have “offset the benefits of fast economic growth in terms of poverty reduction” consequently slowing down the rate of poverty reduction (Kakwani, Prakash, and Son, 2000). This goes to show that initial uneven distribution of income as well as initial inequality in the country affects how well

or how poorly poverty will respond to economic growth, and as a result, governments need to put in place policies that are specific to, and appropriate for the prevailing conditions in their countries.

The achievement of poverty reduction relies heavily on its approach and no single approach is sufficient on its own. The twin pillars of both pro-poor growth and economic growth coupled with social development are fundamental elements in the reduction of poverty and result in socially inclusive development (Asian Development Bank, 1999). The most successful East Asian countries in the 1970s and 1980s showed that rapid growth, combined with low initial inequality and pro-poor distributional change, could significantly reduce poverty (The World Bank, 1993).

2.5 The Role of Livestock in Poverty Reduction

Rwanda has taken the pro-poor approach towards reducing poverty, and this is evident in the introduction and implementation of programmes such as Girinka. Girinka is a pro-poor programme in that it enables the poor to participate in and contribute to the country's economic growth through increased productivity, as well as benefit from it through the sale of dairy products (Ferro, Rosenblatt, and Stern, 2002). The Girinka Programme inherently attempts to counteract inequality, by providing assets to the poor and empowering them through doing so. The majority of Rwanda's population (85%) is rural, and approximately 80% of Rwandans living in Rwanda rely on agriculture as a primary source of livelihood (Bizimana et al., 2012). Agriculture, according to the NISR (2012), is the backbone of Rwanda's economy. Therefore, given its dominance in Rwanda's economy, agriculture is a primary source of growth and means of poverty reduction (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2006). Some studies have also shown that agriculture plays a key role in the reduction of poverty, and that "improvements in agricultural productivity offer the most direct route to the relief of rural poverty" (Upton, 2004). Agriculture includes households engaged in farming, herding, livestock production, fishing and aquaculture (OECD, 2006). Livestock is a crucial source for food and income for agricultural households in Rwanda (NISR, 2012b). Sixty-eight per cent of Rwandans raise some form of livestock, the most common being cattle, goats and chicken (ibid). Livestock-raising however, does not imply livestock-ownership since the "possibility exists that one household can raise the livestock of another household" (ibid). In practicality therefore, 91% of the Rwandan population own and raise some form of livestock (ibid).

Livestock is one of the only livelihood options for the landless and small scale farmers (Upton, 2004). “Livestock are a key means to facilitate the potential of the poor...and the sale and consumption of animal products decrease the vulnerability of households to normal seasonal food and income deprivations” (Holmann et al., 2005). It has been shown that the livestock sector and its potential contribution to poverty reduction has often been ignored by governments and left out of their poverty reduction strategies and only four African countries namely Guinea, Mozambique, Rwanda and Mauritania, have put into place appropriate strategies for the livestock sector (Alary, Corniaux, and Gautier, 2011).

Studies have shown that the potential of cattle, as an asset, to reduce poverty is enormous (Holmann et al., 2005). Livestock kept by the poor can produce a regular supply of nutrient-rich animal supply foods “that provide a critical supplement and diversity to staple plant-based diets” (Randolph et al., 2007), which in turn creates strong, healthy, productive citizens and it has been found that health status determines one’s capacity to work (Moser, 2006). Therefore, promoting animal ownership has the potential to increase productivity. Studies have also shown that animal ownership creates opportunity for income generation, greater soil fertility through the supply of organic manure, bio-fuel from organic manure, and the enhancement of social status (Randolph et al., 2007).

Results from a study done on the role of livestock in poverty alleviation in Colombia showed that small farmers recognise cattle as a key determinant in the improvement of their quality of life due to their potential to produce milk and beef for family consumption, provide manure for crop fertility, and their ability to act as a mechanism for savings and building capital, as well as their ability to reduce and diversify risk due to crop failure (Holmann et al., 2005). The same study showed that the milking cow was one of the leading factors contributing to improved well-being in Colombia (ibid). As assets, livestock act as a form of insurance and saving, and can be liquidated in the event that an urgent need for cash arises (Upton, 2004). Upton (ibid) also argues that increased livestock productivity has a direct impact on household incomes and the incidence of poverty because once the poor acquire livestock they are able to satisfy their immediate food and cash needs and since animals gain in value over time, he argues that this provides a route to owning other assets. Additionally, assets such as cattle provide poor people with a “protective safety-net” and can prevent them from falling back into poverty in the event of sudden stresses or shocks (Moser, 2006). Cows are a source of sustenance and owning a cow gives beneficiaries capability and agency (Bebbington, 1999). Furthermore, livestock are a crucial capital asset, “which with careful tending

can propel households out of abject poverty and into market economies” (Heffernan, 2004). Careful tending, however, is not the only condition for ensured productivity and a reduction in poverty. Giving a cow to a poor family that may have potentially never owned any form of livestock, without the proper training on how to manage it, is as good as giving a hungry man a fishing net and not teaching him how to fish. According to Heffernan (2004), “it is increasingly recognised that in the application of livestock as a means of poverty alleviation, for every benefit, there is a direct cost for the poor households involved”, and these costs include maintenance costs and animal health care costs, and in countries with poor infrastructure, profit margins may be limited (ibid). These costs may be higher if the owners of cattle have no prior training in animal management. In a study done on 20 villages in the Western Province of Kenya, Kristjanson et al. (2004) found that keeping livestock, especially cattle, was one of the major factors leading to an escape from household level poverty. The study also showed however, that one of the reasons that led to low agricultural and livestock productivity was the lack of sufficient training in animal husbandry and management (ibid). Adequate training on animal husbandry and management is crucial in programmes such as Girinka, since beneficiaries are usually very poor and have never previously owned livestock and therefore may lack the knowledge necessary to utilise and manage livestock in a productive manner (Argent, Augsburg, and Rasul, 2013).

This study analysed the contribution of the Girinka Programme to the reduction of poverty through the lens of existing literature discussed in this chapter, alongside the definition of poverty used for this study, which provided a measurement tool.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Qualitative Research Design

A qualitative research design was used for this study. This approach was deemed most appropriate because the nature of this study required a ground level perspective as well as a holistic overview of the local actors (Miles and Huberman, 1994) in order to thoroughly accomplish the research objective of this study. This was done through interactions and interviews with local actors in Kayonza district and enabled the researcher to capture data “from the inside” through a process of “close contact and deep attentiveness” (ibid). Additionally, with the use of this approach, this study has contributed further to a deeper and more context-specific conceptualization of poverty.

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Mukarange sector, located in Kayonza district, which is in the Eastern Province of Rwanda. I met with the Mayor of Kayonza upon my arrival on the field to personally inform him of my study and present to him my UCT letter of authorization for fieldwork, as had been previously requested by the district office on my preliminary visit to the area in December 2013. The mayor introduced me to the Sector Vet, who is also the Girinka Coordinator for Mukarange sector. The Sector Vet was assigned to be my guide for the duration of my fieldwork.

3.2 Selection of Respondents

Sampling was based on a non-probability purposive sampling method. With this method, respondents were selected based on their relevance to the study. A list of all beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries was provided by the Mukarange Sector Vet. He provided one list of all current beneficiaries in Mukarange and a separate list of those on the waiting list (prospective beneficiaries). The initial list provided included all current beneficiaries including those who received their cows in 2013, so I requested the Sector Vet to omit from the list, beneficiaries who have owned a cow for less than two years. Therefore, the final list used for this study was not of all beneficiaries in Mukarange but it was of all beneficiaries in the sector who, at the time of the study, had owned a cow for at least 2 years. This was done because 2 years of ownership was perceived to be a sufficient period of time for one to be able to see and/or measure a meaningful difference in the lives of beneficiaries. It was therefore from this final list of beneficiaries that the respondents were selected. The total number of beneficiaries in Mukarange who have owned a cow for 2 or more years was, at the time of the study, 501.

The same design was applied to the selection of prospective beneficiaries (those on the waiting list). In addition to interviewing and interacting with beneficiaries, prospective beneficiaries of the programme were also interviewed. Evaluating and identifying differences between beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries through interactions and interviews provided a clearer picture in regard to the true impact of this programme and in so doing, contributed to the validity of this study. Moreover, prospective beneficiaries were interviewed in order to identify some of the motivating factors behind applying for a cow through the programme, and what they hoped to gain from receiving a cow. Furthermore, their living conditions were a useful point of comparison with those of current beneficiaries. These interviews and interactions made a significant contribution to this study.

3.3 Data Collection

Semi-structured, in-depth, face to face interviews were conducted with 9 beneficiaries and 6 prospective beneficiaries, as well as with the National Director of the Girinka Programme, and the Sector Vet who is also the Mukarange Coordinator of the Girinka Programme. A larger number of current beneficiaries were interviewed in comparison with prospective beneficiaries since they were the main focus of this study. Four interview guides, for each set of respondents mentioned above, were compiled prior to traveling to the field and each interview was based on its respective interview guide. Interview guides were based on the definition of poverty used for this study, as well as the central research question. Each interview lasted approximately 60-75 minutes. Respondents were provided with a consent form which was read out to them in the Rwandan national language, Kinyarwanda, which I speak fluently. Kinyarwanda is the one and only national language in Rwanda. Interviews began only once the respondents had offered their consent. All interviews were carried out in Kinyarwanda. The main objective of the interviews and interactions with the respondents on field was to gain a deep understanding of their current living conditions and in the case of the beneficiaries, their living conditions prior to receiving a cow, in order to gain insight on the contribution of their cow to a reduction in their poverty levels.

This study also included a review of secondary data such as Girinka Programme brochures, as well as annual reports and testimonials. This information was useful in complementing face-to-face interviews. Collectively, these sources of data provided more insightful input to this study as well as introduced a different perspective to the subject matter.

In assessing the level of poverty of programme beneficiaries, prospective beneficiaries, and their families, the following indicators drawn from the UN definition of poverty used for this study, were evaluated:

1. Nutrition
2. Access to health care services
3. Access to credit
4. Access to clean water
5. Education

3.4 Data Preparation and Analysis

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). The first step after data collection was to transcribe all the interviews that were conducted for this study. Although interviews were carried out in Kinyarwanda, transcription was done in English.

In order to develop “an initial sense of issues arising from the data”, all interviews were closely read (De Wet and Erasmus, 2005) after transcription. This also allowed for a more connected understanding of the “fragmented data in context” (ibid). At this primary level of analysis, it was apparent that the programme made an overall positive and significant contribution to the livelihoods and poverty levels of its beneficiaries. A second and third reading confirmed this.

Data was then carefully and closely reviewed line by line and codes were assigned where relevant and appropriate. The “analytical choices” of what data to code and what to pull out took place at this stage of analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994). A list of codes was developed based on the indicators of poverty used for this study. Each indicator was used as a code for analysis. Coding was done manually on a computer whereby chunks of data from transcriptions were copied and pasted to their relevant categories which were each listed in separate file folders. This was to ensure that quotes remained in their original form.

The next step after coding was the identification of patterns, themes and relationships, which facilitated further the analytical process as well as the generation of meaning from the data.

Miles and Huberman (1994) define 13 “tactics for generating meaning” and 4 of these main tactics were followed for this study:

- Noting patterns and themes:
- Making Contrasts and Comparisons
- Building a logical chain of evidence
- Making conceptual/theoretical coherence

3.5 Ethical Considerations

All interviews for this study were carried out strictly upon receipt of written or verbal consent (recorded) from respondents. Respondents were briefed on the purpose and nature of the interview prior to beginning the interview. For purposes of anonymity, this study uses pseudonyms for all respondents except the National Director of the Girinka Programme, Andrew Kagabo.

3.6 Limitations

Due to budget and time limitations, I was unable to interview and interact with additional beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries, which would have otherwise greatly enriched this study. Due to the limited number of respondents interviewed, and the qualitative nature of this study, the findings of this study are not representative of the entire Kayonza beneficiary and prospective beneficiary population, or the Girinka Programme in its entirety.

Furthermore, difficulties were experienced in accessing secondary data in the form of reliable and up-to-date programme information such as annual reports, progress reports, beneficiary follow up reports, etc. Girinka has no official website and most programme documents are stored online on Rwandapedia and the RAB website. However, this did not include detailed reports and monitoring and evaluation reports. It also did not include progress reports on beneficiaries. No baseline studies were carried out on beneficiaries before they received a cow and at the time of this study, there were no existing official monitoring and evaluation reports for the programme in Kayonza District. This made it difficult to further assess and confirm how beneficiaries were living prior to receiving a cow and would have greatly contributed to the analysis of this study. Consequently, this study had to rely largely on national statistics, government reports, and interviews with programme officials, as well as the voices of the beneficiaries. Although government reports and national statistics give important and detailed information, they are not specific to the Girinka Programme and its specific contribution to poverty reduction. This is why interviews and interactions with programme beneficiaries were particularly significant for this study.

Lastly, there has been very little research done on the Girinka Programme and its contribution to poverty reduction, and although this was a limitation, it was and remains an opportunity for further research.

Chapter 4: Case Study

This case study looked at the Girinka Programme, a nationwide pro-poor approach to poverty reduction in Rwanda, and how it is contributing to a reduction in poverty in the lives of its beneficiaries. This case study measures poverty using the following 5 key indicators derived from the United Nations definition of overall poverty:

1. Nutrition
2. Access to Health Care Services
3. Access to Water
4. Education
5. Access to Credit

A total of 17 respondents, including 9 current beneficiaries and 6 prospective beneficiaries were interviewed for this study. The National Girinka Programme Director and the Sector Vet/Mukarange Sector Coordinator of the Girinka Programme were also interviewed, and contributed significantly to this study. Below is a summary of the respondents.

Table 1: Summary of Respondents

Respondents		Interview Type	Female Respondents	Male Respondents
Beneficiaries	9	Face to Face	5	4
Prospective Beneficiaries	6	Face to Face	2	4
Mukarange Sector Vet and Local Coordinator of the Girinka Programme in Mukarange	1	Face to Face	0	1
National Director of the Girinka Programme	1	Face to Face	0	1
Total	17	-	7	10

Source: Author, 2014

This chapter begins with an overview of Kayonza District, which is where the fieldwork for this case study was carried out. It presents a general overview of the beneficiaries and finally provides a report on each indicator of poverty.

4.1 Kayonza District

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Mukarange Sector, Kayonza District. Kayonza is located in the Eastern Province of Rwanda, approximately 75 kilometres east of Rwanda's capital, Kigali. According to Rwanda's 2012 Evolution of Poverty Report, the Eastern Province was the second least poor province in Rwanda after Kigali City, with Kayonza being among its most successful district. However, according to the NISR (2014), in terms of non-monetary poverty, the Eastern Province was found to be "very deprived", with poor infrastructure and insufficient access to water, schools, and clinics, despite the fact that it recorded "large improvements in income poverty". I found this contradiction well-suited for my study and it informed my decision to carry out my fieldwork in Kayonza. Furthermore, the Eastern Province has the highest number of Girinka beneficiaries nationwide, with 58,780 beneficiaries since the start of the Girinka Programme in 2006 (RAB, n.d). Seventy percent of households in the Eastern Province own livestock and 96.9% of the province's households cultivate land for crop production (NISR, 2012b).

Kayonza is one of the 7 districts in the Eastern Province and has 12 sectors and a total population of 332,000 people with 83% of the total population under the age of 40 (NISR, 2012c). Agriculture is the main industry in Kayonza, with more than 80% of the population depending on agriculture for their survival and 64% of households owning some form of livestock (ibid). The average size of land cultivated per household in Kayonza district is 0.82 hectares (ibid), which is above the minimum required for eligibility in the Girinka Programme. The average household size in Kayonza is 4.7 (ibid). As per the national poverty line, 57% of the population in Kayonza is classified as non-poor, 23% as poor, and 19% as extremely poor (ibid).

Kayonza is home to one of the most well-known "Model Villages" in Rwanda, famously known as Nyagatovu Village. In an effort to eliminate grass-thatched housing, improve rural settlement conditions, facilitate the provision of services, bring an end to scattered village settlement as well as reduce poverty, the GoR initiated a national housing plan which included a rural resettlement program that led to the construction and development of model villages locally known as "Imidugudu" (planned settlements). Traditionally, Rwandans, particularly in rural areas, lived in grass-thatched and/or mud bricked housing, and houses were scattered across villages, presenting challenges to the government in the provision of services and government planning. With the creation of the rural development program, the GoR through the Ministry of Local Government and provincial leaders constructed 4 model villages, one in each province, which were to serve as a blueprint for other districts across the country. These villages consist of a development package with

11 components including education, health care, agriculture and commercial infrastructure (Bosco, personal communication, 2014 June 9). Nyagatovu Model Village in Kayonza has been an exemplary village, attracting high profile visitors like Former U.S President Bill Clinton and President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni. The Nyagatovu Model Village has 85 identical houses with 422 inhabitants, and I met with 4 beneficiaries of the Girinka Programme who live in this village. According to the Mukarange Sector Vet, Bosco, who is also the village vet for Nyagatovu village, many of the residents in Nyagatovu village were previously extremely poor, landless, and vulnerable (genocide survivors, persons living with HIV/AIDS, orphans and the elderly), and the GoR, through the construction of this village, has provided decent housing for them with access to electricity, water, schools, as well as health centres (ibid). Bosco explained to me that “the government gathered all the poor, elderly, vulnerable people who were previously scattered across Mukarange and brought them together here [Nyagatovu], gave them new modern houses with electricity and a garden” (ibid). Each of the houses I visited was well structured, had electricity, and a small to medium vegetable garden at the back of the house, typically beside the kitchen, which residents called ‘kitchen gardens’. Residents grew a diverse range of fruits and vegetables including beetroot, cabbage, oranges, lemons, and spinach.

Figure 1: A billboard in Nyagatovu village displaying photos of its communal cowshed and some of the houses in the village.



Source: Author, from fieldwork, 2014

Figure 2: Model House in Nyagatovu Village



Source: Author, from fieldwork, 2014

Additionally, the District of Kayonza with the support of the GoR, built a communal cowshed for residents of Nyagatovu, enabling residents who were otherwise ineligible to receive a cow through the Girinka Programme, to now have the opportunity to own a cow. Each beneficiary is allocated 3 sheds in the communal cowshed. The first shed is for the cow to feed in and spend the day in, the second is for the cow to sleep in, and the third is for its calf. This is intended to promote hygiene and prevent crowding.

Figure 3: Communal Cowshed for Nyagatovu Village Residents



Source: Author, from fieldwork, 2014

Only one house out of the 4 that I visited in Nyagatovu Village, however, had running water. This was also the only household that had running water in all of the households visited for this study. All other respondents fetched water from a nearby source, either a communal tap at the local youth centre or Lake Muhazi. Kiosks around the village also sold water.

4.2 Overview of Respondents

One of the 4 beneficiaries that was interviewed for this study from the Nyagatovu Model Village was an elderly man, Augustine Buricyera, along with his wife Odette, aged 82 and 78 respectively, who had been previously landless and unable to get a cow through the Girinka Programme as a result. The couple lives with one grandchild who helps them with fetching water and collecting fodder for the cow. The cowshed is located just a 3 minute walk from their house and he was able to walk me there to take a look at his cow. Below is a photo of Augustine with his two cows in the Nyagatovu communal cowshed. Augustine sells 7- 8 litres of milk a day and the income from these sales is what keeps his family afloat.

I'm an old man, you saw my wife, she's old too...we don't have the strength to cultivate anymore and pick up the hoe to go digging every day, so I don't know how we would be living if we didn't have cows and really, what's life for an old man like me without a cow? (Buricyera, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

Figure 4: Augustine and the author in his cowshed



Source: Author, from fieldwork, 2014

Note: The calf on the right is his new born calf, and the middle shed is what is known as the 'sleeping shed'. The mother cow (on the left) is currently in her feeding shed.

Vestine Uwicyeza was another one of the 4 beneficiaries from Nyagatovu Model Village interviewed for this study. Vestine is a widow of the 1994 genocide and was one of 3 widows interviewed for this study. Vestine lost her husband and 3 of her children during the 1994 genocide and was left to raise and take care of her 2 surviving children, 3 of her nieces, 2 adopted relatives, and her elderly mother. For years after the genocide, Vestine was unable to recover from the trauma of her experiences in the genocide and was fully dependent on the National Assistance Fund for Needy Survivors of Genocide (FARG), a government fund that provides regular financial support to vulnerable genocide survivors. She was unable to work because of her depression. Vestine depended on FARG for everything from her and her family's medical expenses, to bus fare. Receiving a cow in 2006 through the Girinka Programme significantly changed her life. Out of all the respondents interviewed for this study, Vestine has been the most successful. She runs a poultry farming business at her house, she is the only beneficiary who had both electricity and running water in her household, she has set up bio gas at her house, and she currently has 3 cows. Owning a cow was not only a financial breakthrough for Vestine, it was also the personal breakthrough that she so desperately needed. Owning a cow, as she puts it, gave her hope for the future. A hope she had lost a long time ago.

I didn't see a future for myself. At that time, it's almost like I was just waiting to die. Because of my depression I didn't even feel like doing anything or hearing anything that anyone tried to tell me about how I can better myself. But when I received my cow, immediately, I felt like a new person. Owning a cow took away the fear I had of being in my own home. I was always scared and I didn't like visitors. I felt embarrassed to have visitors over. Now, just to hear the cows low at night makes me feel secure. I feel a sense of security that I can't really explain. I just feel safe. This cow also allowed me to love again. After the genocide I was incapable of loving, my heart was cold, and I didn't trust anyone, but because of the pride that comes along with owning a cow, I'm able to love again and when I have visitors I'm proud of my house and I can make them some milk tea, we can sit on these couches in this living room. My neighbours come here to watch television. It's amazing. I thank God for this every day...I feel valued. The fact that the government gave me a cow makes me feel valued (Uwicyeza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

This sentiment was one that I found to be shared among many beneficiaries, particularly widows, who I met during my fieldwork. Cows offer a sense of companionship and safety for widows in female headed households, because as Esperance Uwanyirigira explains, "you have someone/something to take care of again and you feel protected...it's that extra presence in the house" (Uwanyirigira, personal interview, 2014 June 15). Esperance is a divorcee and single mother of 5, who received a cow through the Girinka Programme in 2007. She says that when the government gave her a cow, they also took away all her sorrow:

As a single mother, I had a lot of stress, especially considering my situation with my husband and the circumstances in which we separated. I was consumed by my thoughts...I always tried to keep it together for the sake of my children, but sometimes I felt like I was going to implode. Ever since I got my cow, it's almost like a new husband. *laughs.* As silly as that sounds, it has taken away all my sorrow. When I call it by name and it responds, when I walk passed it and it lows, I feel a peace and a love that I can't describe. I'm at ease now. Even when I'm having a stressful day, it all goes away when I get home. The smell of the cow alone when I am approaching my doorstep is enough to brighten my day (Uwanyirigira, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

Kagabo, the National Director of the Girinka Programme, reaffirmed the contribution of this programme to the healing process for genocide survivors and stated that cows offer not only financial gains, but also personal gains. They offer companionship to beneficiaries and re-instil in them a sense of dignity and self-worth. "I have seen cows become companions for widows and I have seen cows assist in the recovery of trauma cases across the country" (Kagabo, personal interview, 2014, June 20). Feelings such as those of Esperance and Vestine are deeply rooted in Rwanda's culture. Culturally, cows offer financial security but also personal security by elevating one's social status and personal self-esteem. Traditionally, owning a cow(s) made you a real man and as a woman it signified your worth.

Francois Nkurunziza received his cow in 2012 and since then he has been able to buy a house where he and his family currently reside, he sells vegetables from his small farm to the market, and he sells milk to a nearby restaurant on a daily basis. His cow is now pregnant for the second time. Prior to receiving a cow Francois was working as a part time construction worker and had a small piece of land where his family cultivated their own food. When he received his first cow from Girinka, Francois quit his job to focus full time on his cow and his crops. His crop productivity has significantly increased as a result of more organic fertilizer from his cow's manure, and he now has surplus to sell to the market. When comparing his life before he got a cow to his life now, Francois told me:

Life was hard before receiving a cow. We didn't produce as much as we do today, and we had barely enough for the family. Now, we have extra carrots and sweet potatoes that we sell to the market. All because of the extra fertilizer (Nkurunziza, personal interview, 2014 June 12).

Despite increased crop productivity and the house he was able to build for his family, Francois still has a lot he would like to accomplish. He still has not been able to put a rooftop over his cowshed, because he doesn't have much money left after he buys fodder for his cow and covers all his children's education expenses. He hopes to build a better cowshed in the near future as well as set up bio gas in his house.

Figure 5: Francois Nkurunziza with his cow in its cowshed. In the background is his three-bedroomed house.



Source: Author, from fieldwork, 2014

4.3 Nutrition

According to the UN, poverty means not having enough food to feed a family (UN, 1998). Based on this single indicator, none of the respondents, both current and prospective beneficiaries were ever poor. Prior to the start of my fieldwork, I held the assumption that most, if not all of the beneficiaries that I would be interviewing and interacting with, would have at some point in their lives, particularly prior to receiving a cow, suffered from or dealt with malnutrition within their immediate families. More so, I expected to be exposed to recent, if not ongoing, cases of malnutrition in non-beneficiaries of the programme. These pre-conceived assumptions were informed by the literature available on the Girinka Programme and the reasons it was established. As mentioned earlier, in 2006, Rwanda's malnutrition rate was one of the highest in the East African Region, with a chronic malnutrition rate of 51%. The Girinka Programme was therefore established to reduce malnutrition rates and simultaneously increase agricultural productivity, while reducing poverty in the process. After 6 years of Girinka, Rwanda was still faced with a malnutrition problem and this study aimed to fit in this gap by investigating why and how malnutrition was still a major problem even after the introduction and establishment of the Girinka Programme nationwide. To my surprise, when I got to the field, none of the 15 current and prospective beneficiaries interviewed for this study had ever suffered from malnutrition or had a family member suffer from malnutrition.

However, some respondents stated that there were cases of malnutrition existing in their villages prior to the introduction of Girinka. One respondent indicated that although no-one in his family had ever suffered from malnutrition, he knew neighbours who had. He indicated that before the Girinka Programme was introduced to his area, it was common to hear of neighbours or their children suffering from malnutrition, but that since its establishment, they have not heard of anyone in the village or sector suffering from or complaining of malnutrition.

Back in the day before this programme of giving away cows started we would hear that so and so's child has malnutrition, or so and so is malnourished. You would see children playing and even though they were not physically sick, you could tell they were not well fed. But that is history now. You won't hear of anyone complaining or suffering from malnutrition. No village that has people with cows can have malnourished children (Buricyera, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

Although none of the respondents had ever had a direct experience with malnutrition, 10 out of 15 mentioned that malnutrition was a critical issue in their community prior to the introduction of Girinka. Another beneficiary, Calveri Muganda, felt blessed that his children never suffered from malnutrition even though many of the children in his village did.

We were lucky that my children never suffered from malnutrition. It was a blessing, because many children in our village suffered from malnutrition. My children got sick often but never of malnutrition (Muganda, personal interview, 2014, June 12).

Prospective beneficiary Emmanuel Gatete pointed out that malnutrition is not among the reasons he is applying for a cow through the Girinka Programme, because his family has never suffered from or dealt with malnutrition:

No, we don't ever lack food in our home. How can there be malnutrition when we are neighbours with cattle owners? Moreover, we produce enough for our family. We grow enough food really. I want a cow because I want my children to be able to drink milk every day without the stress of having to buy it, and I need the manure for my crops. These two are very expensive these days, so having them without paying for them would be such a blessing. You can't imagine how expensive fertilizer is (Gatete, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

According to Andrew Kagabo, Kayonza District, like many other districts across the country, did not carry out any baseline surveys on the rates of malnutrition prior to the introduction of Girinka and therefore this study did not find any empirical evidence of a quantitative reduction in malnutrition rates. However, based on the interactions and interviews with respondents, malnutrition was shown to have been prevalent in Kayonza District prior to the introduction of Girinka but, according to respondents, no longer exists today.

Fourteen of the 15 respondents were cultivators and each grew their own food on their own plots of land. Rose Nyiridandi was the only respondent who buys food at the market and does not cultivate due to her physical disability. Nevertheless, none of the respondents, including Rose, have ever gone a day without food. However, as one prospective beneficiary pointed out, having food and being sufficiently fed are not one and the same.

We have never slept on an empty stomach but sometimes we can eat the same thing for weeks...eating sweet potatoes and beans every day for lunch and supper sometimes. The children drink porridge without milk...so we're not hungry, but we don't eat well. This is not a good way to live. I know with a cow I will be able to grow more crops and more importantly we will have milk in our home. I have seen the difference in the lives of the Girinka recipients in this village; I want that for my family too (Mutsinzi, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

On the other hand, beneficiaries are able to grow a wide range of fruits and vegetables as a result of increased organic fertilizer from their cow's manure and increased income from the sale of milk which is used to buy more seeds and also allows beneficiaries more time to spend in fields taking care of crops, rather than out and about in search of part time jobs and/or casual labour opportunities. The extra income allows them to purchase meat, which is not common in the rural areas.

Before we got this cow, my children used to drink water or sorghum juice – milk was rare. We couldn't afford it. Now we drink milk every day and my children don't drink sorghum juice anymore. The youngest one doesn't even know what it is. They are healthier now and they don't get sick as often as they used to. We have a kitchen garden and we grow spinach, beetroot, and avocados and papayas. We had never eaten beetroot or spinach until we got a cow. We are healthy and happy as a result (Muganda, personal interview, 2014 June 12).

Back then, we didn't produce as much as we do today. We lived from hoe to mouth. We had just enough for us [his family] to eat. Now, we have more than enough because of the manure. We harvest so many carrots and sweet potatoes that we have extra for the market – we even have mangoes and we can afford meat these days (Nkurunziza, personal interview, 2014 June 12).

We never had a real problem of food, but it was very exhausting...all the digging and cultivating every day with insufficient manure and fertilizer. It was a struggle, but we always ate. The quality of food was different as well...our food is much richer and tastier now because we have enough fertilizer. It's not like before (Munyaneza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

It's not until I got a cow from the Girinka Programme that I learned about a kitchen garden in our training programs. Now I have one, we get seeds from RAB or sometimes at the market for very cheap. Currently in the back I have lemons, papaya, avocado and cabbage. I have never felt this strong and healthy...I feel younger actually, even my skin is bright and smooth– can you tell? *laughs* (Ntirengana, personal interview, 2014 June 19).

Each current beneficiary emphasized on the fact that receiving a cow has increased the quality of their food due to fertilizers, and enabled them to eat a more balanced and healthy diet, one which they were not able to enjoy prior to receiving a cow.

4.4 Health Care Services

The UN definition of poverty specifies that, among other insufficiencies, poverty means not having a school or clinic to go to.

In 2003, Rwanda introduced a nationwide Community Based Health Insurance Scheme known as Mutuelle de Santé (Mutual Health Insurance) to increase access to health care and make health care more affordable for Rwandans. Mukarange Sector has 2 health centres, Rutare Health Centre and Mukarange Health Centre, both in close proximity to Mukarange residents. Enrolment in this scheme is “based at the family level” which means that “once a decision for enrolment is taken, all family members have to be enrolled” (Makaka et al., 2012). However, all required fees are calculated at an individual level and each individual is required to pay an annual contribution and an individual co-payment of 10% of the total amount invoiced upon a visit to a health centre (ibid). The annual contribution depends on the category of poverty that an individual belongs to, and this is based on existing national poverty categories (ibid). Therefore, the poorer the individual, the less he/she is expected to contribute. The GoR reported that in 2010, 91% of the Rwandan population was insured through the national Mutual Health Insurance scheme (GoR, n.d). However, despite government efforts to make health care affordable for the poor, some Rwandans, particularly rural based, unemployed Rwandans, are still unable to afford health insurance and consequently have limited, if any, access to health care.

Seven of the 9 beneficiaries interviewed for this study did not have health care insurance prior to receiving a cow and only 3 of the 6 prospective beneficiaries have health care insurance today. One of the 3 insured prospective beneficiaries interviewed was an elderly woman whose son covers her health insurance for her because she cannot afford it. *“My son pays for my health insurance, I can’t afford it...I don’t have a job”* (Buhinjori, personal interview, 2014 June 13). However, all of the current beneficiaries (9 out of 9) are insured along with all their family members. Below are some of their testimonies:

First thing I did with my first few months of income from my milk sales was to make sure I got everyone in my family enrolled in the national health insurance scheme. We are all insured now (Nkurunziza, personal interview, 2014 June 12).

We are all insured now, so I know that even if one of my children gets sick, I can take them to a clinic and they can get medical attention in time. We didn't have health insurance before...I have 5 children and I couldn't afford to get insurance for all so I didn't get for any (Uwanyirigira, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

We don't have any problem with getting medical attention now...we are all covered and when the children get sick they get treated well and quickly. We feel secure now that we are all insured (Mukamurangira, personal interview, 2014 June 19).

Uwanyirigira's experience is similar to that of many respondents that I interacted with for this study. Respondents with big families could not afford health insurance for the entire family and so they opted not to enrol any family member at all.

No, we didn't have health insurance before we got this cow...I have 10 children plus myself and my wife. Where would I have been able to get the money to pay for 12 people? (Munyaneza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

My children would get sick a lot before we got a cow, flus and coughs all the time, stomach issues, too many things...now we know it is because they weren't eating well. We don't have those problems anymore. When they would get sick we would just keep them home until they got better, thankfully it was never anything that required them to be admitted in hospital so we managed at home, and we would just go to the pharmacy, get advice from the pharmacist and buy medicine, sometimes on loan. Now we are all covered, if one gets sick we take them straight to the health centre. But ironically now that we can afford health care, they are not getting sick as much (Muganda, personal interview, 2014 June 12).

Some prospective beneficiaries like Anicet Mutsinzi and Celine Mukansine are doing what Muganda was doing prior to receiving a cow and are taking their children to the pharmacist for treatment instead of to a health centre because that is what they can afford.

We don't have health insurance at the moment....because of the instability of my income. I have temporary jobs here and there, and at the moment I'm unemployed, so I can't really afford to pay for insurance for me and my family just yet...when one of us gets sick, we go to the pharmacy. I'm hoping I will be next year, if I am accepted into the programme (Mutsinzi, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

Due to the extra income derived from the sale of milk, current beneficiaries are able to afford their health insurance contribution and co-payments for themselves and their families and with this insurance are able to access local health care within Mukarange and Kayonza as well as transfers to hospitals in the capital city, Kigali. Augustin was able to undergo an operation in Kigali last year after being transferred from a Kayonza District hospital because his insurance covered the operation. Additionally, he was able to afford the co-payment for the surgery due to the income from his cows.

Owning a cow provided additional income to families which majority of them used to enrol their families in an insurance scheme, and steady, regular income from the sales of milk and crops

enabled beneficiaries to continue to pay the required contribution and afford co-payments when necessary.

4.5 Access to Water

The NISR (2012) reported that approximately 50% of households in Kayonza “walk for under 15 minutes to reach an improved water source”. All of the respondents interviewed for this study have access to an improved water source, but as the Sector Vet indicated on the first day of my fieldwork, water was and is a critical issue in the greater Kayonza District. I experienced this water shortage first hand, at the guest house where I stayed and at the district offices, as well as in the homes of the respondents. Only 1 of the 15 current and prospective beneficiaries, Vestine Uwicyeza, had running water in her house. Two of the 15 had purchased water tanks for their homes.

We have a big problem with water in this area. It is very unreliable, so I sold my cow's first bull and bought a water tank with the money I got from it. So when it rains, we fill the water tank. Otherwise we pay the local water authority truck to come fill it for us. It has saved us all the trouble of fetching 2-3 times a day and the water was never enough for us back then...we don't have a problem anymore (Uwanyirigira, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

We don't have running water at my house but we have a water tank that helps quite a lot, especially in rainy seasons I invested in a water tank two years ago and it has helped us a great deal (Mukamurangira, personal interview, 2014 June 19).

The remaining 12 out of 15 of the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, either buy or fetch water from a nearby source. There are several kiosks around Mukarange village that sell water at approximately 120 RWF (0.17 USD) per 20 litre jerrican. Although there are improved water sources and kiosks in relative proximity to the beneficiaries I interacted with, this did not imply that they are able to directly benefit from it. While they may have access to water, many of them cannot afford it or are not able to transport sufficient water from the water source to the household. Sometimes the local kiosks are out of water as well and according to several respondents, when that happens they have to fetch water from the lake, which is a relatively long distance away. The lake is approximately an hour from Mukarange Sector on foot or a 20 minute bicycle ride, so many respondents prefer, if they can afford it, to take a bicycle which costs 100-150 RWF (0.14 USD) for a round trip.

We buy from the kiosk down the street. Sometimes there is a shortage of water everywhere and they don't have water either in which case we have to get a bicycle from the road and go to the lake to fetch water. The workers we pay to dig for us go and collect the water for us (Munyanenza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

My pastoralist fetches water for the house at the well just across the road from here and when my grandson is not at school he helps with collecting fodder (Buricyera, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

We fetch water from the city centre because it's nearest to us (Nkurunziza, personal interview, 2014 June 12).

Beneficiaries like Munyaneza and Buricyera are able to afford to hire pastoralists and/or farm workers due to the extra income from the sale of milk and crops, a privilege non-beneficiaries do not have. All of the non-beneficiaries (6 out of 6) I interviewed for this study, either fetched water themselves, or a member of their families did.

We fetch water from here in the village – there's a tank at the youth centre where we fetch water from...we all fetch water, my wife, my children...all of us (Mutsinzi, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

I'm too old to carry a jerrican but my grandchildren do the fetching...they fetch at the lake (Buhinjori, personal interviews, 2014 June 13).

My son fetches water when he can and when he can't I have to send a bike boy to fetch for me (Nyiradandi, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

Therefore, although there were several water sources in the Mukarange Sector and the wider Kayonza area, and even though all respondents had access to these water sources, beneficiaries had easier access to the water sources and were able to benefit more from these sources. Beneficiaries could afford to send pastoralists and/or afford to hire 'bicycle boys' to fetch water for them, and as a result tended to have enough water for use, whereas although prospective beneficiaries had access to clean water, some could not afford it and for some it was insufficient for use.

A jerrican of water is 120, sometimes 150 francs for 20 litres. That's the most we can afford and that's not enough for 6 people. To cook, bathe, wash dishes, wash clothes. We'll fetch sometimes but it's a bit of a distance so we can't fetch a lot of water – we don't have a bicycle or a wheelbarrow so we can only fetch so much. It is easier to buy at the kiosk because it's closer to here [his home] but it's never enough for us (Mutsinzi, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

I fetch water mostly with my oldest daughter. It's never enough, but we are used to working with what we can get (Mukasine, personal interview, 2014 June 17).

4.6 Education

In Rwanda, education is free for all children from primary to junior secondary (secondary 3). Rwanda introduced 9 Year Basic Education (9YBE) in 2009, which made education free and compulsory for every child between the age of 7 and 15 (Paxton and Mutesi, 2012). In 2010/11, the net attendance rate nationally in primary school was 91.7%, a 5.1% increase from 86.6% in 2005/06 (ibid). Mukarange Sector has 5 public schools and 4 private schools. Fourteen out of 15 of the current and prospective beneficiaries in Mukarange Sector had school-age children and all were attending public

school within the sector. Three out of the 15 also had older children in upper secondary school who were not paid for by the government. Despite free 9 year education, education remains unaffordable for some families due to education related costs like uniform expenses, school supplies, and registration fees.

During the time of my interview with Anicet (prospective beneficiary), his son was at home because he had been expelled from school three days prior for not having required school socks and a sweater, which are part of their uniform. Until his father is able to get enough money to buy a pair of socks and a sweater, his son will not be able to go back to school.

Sometimes the children are kicked out of school for not having some of the necessary material and they have to sit at home until we get the money. Just the other day my son was sent home from school because he wasn't wearing socks and didn't have the required sweater. The socks they are required to wear cost 2000 francs and the sweater, 6000, which I don't have. So he's here now. When I get the 8000 francs, he'll go back to school (Mutsinzi, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

Eight thousand RWF is approximately 11 USD and that is just what is needed for a pair of socks and a sweater. Anicet and his wife were, at the time of this study, both unemployed. All of the prospective beneficiaries that were interviewed for this study (6 out of 6) were unemployed and had no regular income. All of them depended fully on agriculture and were mainly subsistence farmers. Three out of the 6 stated that because it is hard to find employment they will sometimes settle for part time, short-term jobs in order to make ends meet. Although they do not have to pay for their children's school fees, they are required to meet numerous other school related costs, many times for more than one child. Family size was an important factor especially in education related expenses. The smallest family that was interviewed for this study had 3 children and the largest had 10. The more school-age children a family has, the higher the risk that their education will at some point be interrupted due to the inability to meet school related expenses. Peragie Mukamurangira is a current beneficiary with 5 children, all school-age, and she indicated that she is unable to open a bank account or start a small business because the largest chunk of her income goes to paying school fees for her older children, buying school supplies and meeting other educational costs for her younger children.

At the moment, I don't have a bank account, because we don't have much to deposit. We are not able to save because we spend the little we have paying school fees and all other school expenses for the children....I'm hoping once the cow gives birth again we will have more income and I can start a small shop (Mukamurangira, personal interview, 2014 June 19).

Andrew Mbiyo is a prospective beneficiary with 7 children and 11 grandchildren. He lost his wife many years ago and remarried recently. All his older children are married with children of their own

and he has only one 6 year old child with his current wife. His last born son attends public school and according to Andrew, he has been able to afford all his son's school supplies as well as all other school related costs.

Yes, I'm able to pay for his school supplies and I'm also able to buy everything he needs before he starts school. I haven't had a problem so far with school materials (Mbiyo, personal interview, 2014 June 14).

Mukankusi Speciose is a widow and mother of 6. Her children's school supplies were previously being covered by the National Assistance Fund for Needy Survivors of Genocide (FARG), but now that she is financially capable of supporting all her children, they are no longer covered by FARG.

Two of my children are currently in public primary school and one in Senior 1, so their fees are paid by the government, but at the beginning of the year, one has to pay 19,000 RWF and then 3000 RWF every term. One is now in secondary 4 and I pay 50,000 RWF for just fees and the other is at a boarding school where I pay 83,000 RWF. FARG is not supporting them anymore so I support them thanks to the income from my milk. The eldest is in Kigali, another finished secondary school last year. He will be starting Physiology in September. The other four come home during the holidays (Mukankusi, personal interview, 2014 June 13).

Speciose spends over 161,000 RWF a year on education costs for her six children (approximately 233 USD), and she states that even though this is difficult for her financially, she knows that it would have been impossible if she didn't have a cow.

Beneficiaries have been able to pay for their children's education and support their children financially not only through primary and secondary, but also at university level. Yoweli Munyaneza has 10 children, including one in university. He indicated that as a result of his monthly income from the sale of his milk, he is able to afford school supplies for all his children and he is most proud of the fact that he was able to access credit from the bank after his daughter graduated from high school and was able to financially support her in her first year at university.

I have 10 children and 7 are in school. Without my cows I don't know how I would be able to afford school materials and such for them. Right now they are all in school and are not lacking anything...before I got a cow, we didn't even have money for shoes (Munyaneza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

My child was going to start university and although she had a government sponsorship for tuition, there was a lot that she needed to get started so I was able set her up at her university and get her everything she needed for her first year...that made me feel very accomplished and proud (Munyaneza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

Before I got this cow, I depended on the government for my survival, even for money for bus fare to take the children to school and bring them back during the holidays. It was that bad. We were like beggars. But let me tell you, since I got this cow...she was 3 months away from giving birth my life changed. As soon as she gave birth we started selling milk and getting consistent flows of cash. I am able now to not only pay for my children's uniform, their

books, and their transportation, I can also afford to go and visit them at their school when I want to, something I was never able to do (Uwicyeza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

Vestine has 3 children who are attending a private secondary boarding school away from home and she independently financially supports them all as a result of her businesses that were made possible by her cows.

I had become a nuisance, buying things for the children from the kiosk on loan all the time when school was about to start because I couldn't afford their school supplies and all the fees we have to pay...it was a difficult time. Now, my children are all comfortably in school, we haven't had any problems with fees or anything like that. Not even for the older ones at boarding school (Uwanyirigira, personal interview, 2014 June 15).

4.7 Access to Credit

Access to finance in developing countries has been considered a necessity just like access to safe clean water or primary education, and this is typically measured by how many people in a region have access to bank accounts (Beck and de la Torre, 2006; Leeladhar, 2005; Littlefield et al; 2006, quoted by Bhandari, 2009). Bank accounts enable people to perform important financial functions like savings schemes and access to credit (Bhandari, 2009). One is considered financially excluded if they do not have a bank account and financial exclusion is considered a source of poverty (Bhandari, 2009). The UN definition of poverty states that in addition to not having a school or clinic to go to, not having access to clean water, and not having enough food, not having access to credit is also an important indicator of poverty. Credit is best accessed through banks and through ownership of a bank account.

Eight of the 9 beneficiaries interviewed for this study had bank accounts and 6 of these 8 opened a bank account only after receiving a cow, whereas only 2 of the 6 prospective beneficiaries interviewed for this study had bank accounts at the time of this study. Of those 2, none of them had, at the time of the study, ever obtained a loan from a bank. Five out of the 15 current and prospective beneficiaries interviewed for this study had accessed credit in the past and still have access to credit now. All those 5 are current beneficiaries. Speciose Mukankusi stated that since receiving a cow in 2011, she has obtained 3 loans, paid off 2 and was, at the time of this study, paying off her most recent one.

I am always looking out for something to do to improve my life. I realized that having a bank account was beneficial to me and enabled me to use my money well. The bank also helped me by giving me loans. First they gave me a loan of 50,000 francs and then 100,000 and then

200,000 which I am paying off now, but I'm almost finished with that one (Mukankusi, personal interview, 2014 June 13).

With the loans she obtained, Mukankusi has been able to set up a boutique near her house which generates supplemental income for her and her family.

Due to the unreliability of the weather and me getting old, I reduced on my farming and cultivating and started a boutique. I can afford to hire a pastoralist now to help me look after the cows and the farm and I can run the boutique. I sell electricity, airtime, sugar...those kinds of things. I just started it so it is not very stable yet, but it's not doing badly at all. The Tigo cash [mobile money] alone earns me about 30,000 francs a month which is amazing (Mukankusi, personal interviews, 2014 June 13).

Uwicyeza received a cow in 2006 and was able to obtain a loan in 2008 which enabled her to set up bio-gas at her house, set up a poultry farming business and grow more diversified crops for sale to the market.

In 2008, I got a loan of 1 million francs from the bank and as we speak today I'm left with only 200 000 left to complete my loan. I know that I'll be done with this by August. Having a cow opened my mind and opened me up to new opportunities. I also started another small business on the side, chicken rearing. I have a chicken shed outside, I will show you later, so I'm able to sell my eggs and get extra money. My cows have enabled me to do this, they sustain this household. I'm able to pay my loans from the income got from selling my eggs from the food that I grow which I also sell...I will show you everything when we're finished (Uwicyeza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

Below is a picture of Vestine's bio gas grinder. She no longer has to buy charcoal or cook with firewood as a result of her bio gas and she does not spend any money on electricity. She uses the manure from her cows to power the bio gas as well as fertilize her soil.

Figure 6: Vestine's mixer for bio gas generation



Source: Author, from fieldwork, 2014

Yoweli Munyaneza received his cow in 2011 and has been able to renovate his house, buy new furniture and most importantly financially support his first born at university as a result of his access to credit.

I have paid off two loans since receiving a cow. I got a loan of 300,000 first and I paid it off in 4 months, and then I got another one for 200,000 which I paid off in 3!...My child was going to university and although she had a government sponsorship for tuition there was a lot that she needed for university so that helped us get her ready for her first year. And then the 200,000 was used for my house. It was in very bad condition before; we didn't even have cemented floors. So I cemented the whole house and put in these new windows. I recently also just got a loan to buy new furniture and improve my farm (plot of land). I will be done with that loan in October (Munyaneza, personal interview, 2014 June 10).

In addition to having access to credit, one current beneficiary indicated that he has been able to open a savings account for his son in the hope that by the time his son is done with high school they will have enough money to send him to university and enough money to keep him there for as long as necessary.

I don't only have an account for myself; I also opened a savings account for my son. I use some of the money from the sales of my milk and vegetables to put in my son's savings account so that he is sure of a future (Ntirengana, personal interview, 2014 June 19).

Chapter 5: Findings, Discussion and Conclusion

The following chapter presents the key findings of this study according to the indicators of poverty that were analysed for this study, namely: nutrition, health care services, access to water, education, and access to credit. These findings are based on an analysis of collected data from interviews and interactions with beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of the Girinka Programme in Kayonza District. Subsequent to the presentation of the findings is a discussion of the findings.

5.1 Nutrition

This study found that there was a substantial difference between prospective beneficiaries and current beneficiaries particularly in the diversity of crop production and general crop productivity. Eight out of the 9 beneficiaries interviewed for this study grew at least 2 types of vegetables and 1 type of fruit, whereas only 2 of 6 prospective beneficiaries grew only 1 type of vegetable. “I grow the usual...cassava, sweet potatoes, matoke [green bananas], and beans” (Buhinjori (prospective beneficiary), personal interview, 2014 June 13). Diversity of crop production is important because beneficiaries have more choices in regard to the kinds of food they can eat. Furthermore, the quality of their diet increases due to the addition of fruits and vegetables which they were not able to eat prior to receiving a cow, and the increase in crop productivity as a result of organic fertilizer from cow manure, provides a surplus in food, which can be sold to the market for extra income.

It was found that the Girinka Programme, in this particular case study, does not uniquely contribute to providing food for families, because as shown in section 4.3, all respondents, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, were and are still able to feed their families, even without a cow. Thus, it is impossible to say with certainty that the programme alone enables families to feed themselves. However, in regard to nourishment, which is the food necessary for growth, health, and good condition as well as increased and diversified household food production, this study found that the Girinka Programme has significantly contributed to an improvement in overall nutrition and an increase in food production at a household level, which in addition to contributing to improved nutrition, provides opportunity for income generation, and in so doing significantly contributes to a reduction in poverty.

5.2 Health Care Services

The UN (1998), in its definition of poverty, states that not having access to a clinic is a key indicator of poverty. However, it became apparent during this study that having access to a clinic is not the same as being able to benefit from its services, and therefore access to a clinic is an ambiguous indicator of poverty. Access to clinics does not imply access to health care services. The beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries interviewed for this study all have access, in the literal sense of the word, to health care clinics in and around their villages. However, not all of them have access to health care services due to the fact they simply cannot afford it. They have access to the facility but they can't afford its services and thus do not benefit from its services. Seven of the 9 current beneficiaries interviewed for this study did not have health care insurance prior to receiving a cow and as a result could not afford health care services. Furthermore, 3 of the 6 prospective beneficiaries have health care insurance today and one of the 3 is a dependent due to her inability to afford it on her own. In most cases, the uninsured went directly to the local pharmacy for medication and medical attention, or depended on financial support from extended family members to meet health care costs. This study found that the majority of current beneficiaries were able to get health insurance only after owning a cow, since they were uninsured prior to receiving a cow. Similarly, it was found that health care insurance and the ability to afford health care services was a major motivating factor for prospective beneficiaries to apply for the Girinka Programme and majority of them, when compared to current beneficiaries, were uninsured and had limited access to health care services. Therefore, on average, more beneficiaries, when compared to prospective beneficiaries, were enrolled in a health insurance scheme and as a result had access to not only clinics, but health care services, and this makes it highly probable that the programme has a direct and significantly positive contribution to the reduction of poverty by increasing access to health care services for its beneficiaries.

5.3 Access to Water

Like access to a clinic, it was also found that access to clean water does not imply that one can afford it or that one has enough at their disposal for use. This study found that beneficiaries, as well as non-beneficiaries, had access, in the literal sense of the word, to clean water from improved water sources like communal taps, lakes, and kiosks that sell water. However, this study found that more beneficiaries had enough water available for use when compared to non-beneficiaries who although they had access to water, did not have sufficient water for use. Water sources like lakes and communal taps were relatively further away than kiosks which were located on almost every road in the village. It was easier to buy a jerrican of water at a kiosk near your house because it was easier to

transport and one could fetch more water as a result, as opposed to walking a longer distance to the communal taps or having to take a bicycle to the lake to fetch water. These long distances limited the number of trips a family could make to fetch water, and also limited the amount of water that could be carried back. This study found that beneficiaries, when compared to non-beneficiaries, were on average more able to afford to buy water from the kiosks due to income from their sales of milk and/or crops, and therefore had better access to water and had more water available for use due to the proximity of the kiosks which made it easier to transport more water. Furthermore, in case of a general shortage of water in the village, beneficiaries had the choice to send 'bicycle boys' to collect water for them at a fee, a choice not many non-beneficiaries had due to the expense attached to the service. Non-beneficiaries had to walk long distances in order to fetch free water, which limited the amount of water they could carry back, and in some cases entire families went together to fetch water in order to be able to carry back enough. This took away from productive time on the fields, which compromised crop productivity as well as children's homework time which has a potential negative impact on school performance.

Therefore, in regard to access to clean and adequate water for use, beneficiaries of the Girinka Programme were found to be doing significantly better than non-beneficiaries. It was therefore apparent that the Girinka Programme, in this particular case, made a positively significant contribution to the reduction of poverty for its beneficiaries, by increasing and easing the access to clean and sufficient water.

5.4 Education

While the UN's definition on poverty states that poverty, among other insufficiencies, means not having a school to go to, this study found that poverty can still persist even with a school to go to, because access to a school does not imply access to education. Education related costs such as uniform, registration fees, transportation, and school supplies, hike the cost of education, and make it unaffordable for many. While free education, as is the case in Rwanda, is very important in reducing education costs, it is not in itself sufficient.

This study found a significant difference between prospective beneficiaries and current beneficiaries in regard to the affordability of overall education, and some prospective beneficiaries indicated that often times they are forced to buy school supplies on loan. This study also found that the more children a family has, the harder it is for the family to afford school supplies and other school related fees.

Although education in Rwanda is free for the first 9 years, education is still expensive and in some cases unaffordable for the average unemployed rural farmer, and the income derived from the sale of milk and other related businesses for beneficiaries plays a major role in educating children at a household level by enabling families to afford school supplies and other school related costs. Families that had no cow were found to be unable to afford school supplies and the few that were able to do so, did so with hardship, had to borrow the money to do so, or purchased supplies on loan. This interrupted children's education and was likely to cause poor performance at school. No beneficiary who was interviewed for this study reported having any problems with meeting school related costs due to the income generated from their cow, and therefore it is evident that the Girinka Programme has enabled children, through their parents, to not only have access to basic education with all required supplies, but pursue their education with minimal interruption, and in some cases enabled parents to finance their children even at the university level.

Therefore, the Girinka Programme was found to have made a very significant and positive contribution to the reduction of poverty in the lives of its beneficiaries by not only increasing access to education, but also increasing the chances of continuation and completion of education.

5.5 Access to Credit

In regard to access to credit, the Girinka Programme was found to have a positive contribution in enabling its beneficiaries to access credit and in so doing, meaningfully contributed to a reduction in poverty. Beneficiaries, through the ownership of a productive asset, and a regular income from the sale of milk and/or food, were able to not only open up bank accounts and have access to credit, they were able to actually acquire loans which they used to improve their livelihoods and this created even more opportunity for advancement. In Rwanda, in order to get a loan from a bank, one first has to have an account with that bank. Secondly and most importantly, one has to have a regular and dependable inflow of income to guarantee monthly payment of the loan. In addition to owning a productive asset such as a cow, the consistent income from the sales of its products makes beneficiaries more eligible for a loan, when compared to prospective beneficiaries, and as a result they have better access to credit.

None of the prospective beneficiaries interviewed for this study, despite 2 out of 6 having bank accounts, had ever obtained a loan from a bank. Whereas, 6 beneficiaries out of the 9 interviewed for this study had obtained at least one loan, at the time of the study, all after receiving their cow. This makes it highly probable, therefore, that it is a result of the Girinka Programme that

beneficiaries were able to access credit and therefore on average, were living considerably better than prospective beneficiaries.

Prospective beneficiaries were found to be aware of the benefits of a bank account and access to credit and this was one of the major factors that informed their decision to apply for a cow through the Girinka Programme.

If I had a bank account, I know that I would then be able to get a loan from the bank and better my life, but I don't have a bank account now– what money would I put in? (Mutsinzi, personal interview, June 15).

I believe if I had a cow, I would have a good steady income and I would be able to get a loan for example and improve my house, maybe even enlarge it such that my children would have their own rooms – at the moment they are all crammed into one small room and it is very uncomfortable (Gatete, personal interview, 2014 June 19).

The UN (1998) definition of poverty used for this study states that poverty, among other things, is a denial of choices and opportunities. This study found that there was a strong association between access to credit and the denial of choices and opportunities. Beneficiaries interviewed for this study had more opportunities as a result of their stable and increasing income but most importantly as a result of their access to credit. The ability to obtain a loan opened up doors of opportunity and enabled beneficiaries to freely choose how and where to invest their money. Access to credit was found to have a direct impact on increasing opportunities and choices for beneficiaries. Non-beneficiaries are therefore denied the opportunity to invest and/or to save due to low and infrequent income which denies them access to credit. By increasing income and access to credit, this study found that the Girinka Programme had a positive and meaningful impact on the reduction of poverty for its beneficiaries.

5.6 Discussion

In the case of the Girinka Programme in Rwanda, I found the arguments made by Kakwani and Pernia (see section 3.4) to be precise. As a pro-poor growth programme, Girinka has enabled the “poor to participate in and benefit from economic activity” through the generation of income from the sales of dairy products, access to credit, and the consequent creation of small to medium businesses (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000). I believe that for developing countries like Rwanda, whose majority population is poor, pro-poor growth strategies and programmes have a more palpable and effective impact on poverty reduction than economic growth. Instead of waiting for the benefits of economic growth to trickle down to the poor, the poor are actively participating in the economy and are not only benefiting from it, but are also contributing to it. Pro-poor growth policies and programmes, such as Girinka, have a direct impact on the poor and take on a holistic approach in the fight against poverty by simultaneously addressing multiple elements of poverty. The Girinka Programme for example, simultaneously addresses issues of income, nutrition, health care, credit, and education which in turn address issues of employment, empowerment, opportunity and choice, dignity, and inclusion. As a pro-poor growth programme, Girinka is promoting inclusive growth by increasing access to “basic adequate nourishment” and as a result, less people are deprived of minimum basic capabilities such as the aforementioned as well as the right to live a healthy, safe and satisfying life (ibid). Furthermore, it is playing a vital role in rural development. Participation in economic growth and rural development are two essential preconditions for the achievement of successful reductions in poverty (The World Bank, 1990). Rural development is important to the growth and development of Rwanda as a whole, because majority of Rwandans live in rural areas and the degree to which growth favours the rural sector is crucial to its impact on overall growth (Ravallion, 2004). In addition to economic inclusion, this programme plays an important role in promoting social inclusion. As a result of being part of the Girinka Programme and more importantly participating in passing on the first born calf to the next poor community member, beneficiaries are interacting not only with each other but with the community in general.

As a livestock programme, Girinka contributes to creating stronger, healthier, and more productive citizens through “nutrient-rich animal supply foods” (Randolph et al., 2007), which increase overall productivity and in so doing contribute to economic growth both at a local and national level. Equally, ownership of cattle, especially in the Rwandan context contributes to the enhancement of social status. The provision of cattle to poor households elevates the poor not only financially, but personally and socially as well. Some beneficiaries believed that by solely owning a cow, they were no longer poor. When I asked Francois, a beneficiary of the programme since 2012, what it means to

him to be poor, he simply said: “not owning cattle” (Nkurunziza, personal interview, 2014 June 12). Francois, like many other Rwandans, believes that cows are symbols and sources of wealth and he personally felt that it is impossible to be poor when one owns cattle. “I’m not a poor man anymore, gone are the days” he said (Nkurunziza, personal interview, 2014 June 12). While as a Rwandan I appreciate that culturally, cows are a symbol and a source of wealth, I find it problematic to accept that the mere ownership of cows is an automatic ticket out of poverty. Owning a cow(s) provides opportunity to graduate from poverty but does not immediately qualify one as non-poor. There are other crucial contributing factors that determine how quickly and effectively a cow can contribute to a reduction in poverty besides mere ownership. Owning cattle has an “enormous potential” (Holmann et al., 2005) to reduce poverty but does not and cannot, on its own reduce poverty. For example, Rose Nyiradandi is a genocide survivor and a widow who lost her entire family except for one son, and a grenade in the genocide left her handicapped with no fingers on her right hand. Rose received a cow through the Girinka Programme in 2011 and she says although she and her son depend on their cow to survive, she knows that she could accomplish more if her circumstances were more favourable. Her son dropped out of school many years ago and is currently unemployed, in and out of depression as a result of their experiences in the genocide. She lives in a small mud-bricked house, in a remote village, with no electricity, and has a makeshift cowshed with no rooftop. Her son refuses to dig and cultivate like other rural families, and since she can’t cultivate either due to her disability, they have to buy food from the market. Rose receives financial support from the National Assistance Fund for Needy Survivors of Genocide (FARG) as well as the District Disability Fund, which together help to keep her household afloat, although she complains that the money never comes in on time and she struggles to make ends meet. Therefore, despite owning a cow, Rose still struggles to make ends meet and has not been able to maximize on the productivity of her cow as highly as other beneficiaries, including those who have owned a cow for a shorter period, as a result of her disability, her trauma, and the lack of family support. Buricyera is 82 years old and physically unable to cultivate, fetch water and collect fodder, but due to the presence of his grandchild who is young, active and healthy, he is able to assist the family and together they are able to take care of their cows and maximize on its productivity. Health, both physical and emotional, is an important factor in determining how quickly and effectively a cow will contribute to a reduction in poverty. Other factors include household size, which translate into family support, living conditions prior to receiving a cow, as well as personal ambition and drive. Esperance has 5 children and Vestine takes care of 8 children. Their household size is relatively large and this translates into family support which, particularly in a rural setting, can determine how effectively and quickly one can benefit from a cow. If you have help at home with fetching water and other household chores

for example, one can focus on feeding and milking the cow, as well as selling milk and as a result a lot more is accomplished in a day and in the long run, the productivity of the cow is higher and the costs lower. Beneficiaries like Rose, are forced to buy food and fodder for the cow because they do not have enough support at home to cultivate and cannot afford a farmworker. As a result, the productivity of the cow is lower, when compared to larger households like Esperance's or Vestine's, and costs at the household level are higher.

In addition to health and family support, another important factor in the positive contribution of Girinka to the reduction of poverty is the training programs carried out by RAB prior to handing over the cows to beneficiaries. As discussed in section 3.5, lack of sufficient training is said to be one of the reasons that lead to low agricultural and livestock productivity (Kristjanson et al., 2004) and the fact that beneficiaries received intensive training on animal husbandry prior to taking their cow home, played a major role in determining the effectiveness of this programme in reducing poverty.

On a personal level, the programme has helped beneficiaries in the recovery of trauma, and has had a positive impact on boosting self-esteem and self-worth. For widows and women in female headed households, more than just feeling a sense of companionship from their cow(s), they feel a sense of worth and value again, a sense of value that they lost with the loss of their husbands. Due to the cow's innate significance in Rwandan culture, no other form of livestock can bring this level of satisfaction and companionship. It is often assumed that the less poverty one is in, the higher the chances that they will be happy and feel more dignified. This is because often times, we attach a monetary value to poverty, and therefore assume that the more money one has, the happier they are or can be. However, this study found that high self-esteem, dignity, contentment and happiness were contributing factors in the reduction of poverty. People were not happy, content and dignified because they were not poor; people were not poor because they were happy, content and dignified. The cow, and not necessarily the income derived from the cow, led to increased self-esteem, self-worth and an increased sense of dignity which made beneficiaries feel happy and "rich". This is the significance, as mentioned in section 1.1, of promoting and incorporating development approaches that are "firmly embedded" in a country's "own experience and culture" (AU, 2013). The cow is culturally significant in Rwandan culture and integrating this into the nation's development and poverty reduction strategy, through a programme like Girinka, has direct impact, not only in the financial lives of its beneficiaries but on their personal lives. This creates happier citizens who are as a result more productive. Furthermore, considering Rwanda's recent history of divisionism and ethnic conflict, this programme is playing a key role in the much needed work of unity and reconciliation as well as in the restitution of dignity at a personal level and a national level, through

the promotion of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. These factors play a major role in the overall development of a country.

Despite its success, the Girinka Programme faces several major challenges and there is great need for improvement in order to enhance its poverty reducing impact. First and foremost, as a result of its success, many poor Rwandans have gained interest in the programme and applied for a cow through the programme. Due to limited funds and increasing applications, there is a long and ever increasing waiting list. Therefore, there is an urgent need for more funding in order to meet the need and contribute further to poverty reduction.

Secondly, the programme faces shortages of veterinary staff across the districts and sectors. For example, in Mukarange sector, there is only one veterinary officer who is responsible for visiting and following up beneficiaries, providing veterinary services and support, collecting and tracking new applications, running the day to day administration of the programme at sector level as well as reporting and providing feedback to the district offices. This leads to serious administrative issues such as inappropriate record keeping and data loss. Due to the lack of computers as a result of resource limitations, data is collected and stored in paper files and consequently locating files and records becomes very difficult and sometimes documents are lost in the process. Furthermore, there is limited financial support for local veterinary officials in terms of transportation and daily expenses to facilitate their work and the bureaucracies involved in applying for funds are long and sometimes inconsistent. This causes delays in the provision of services and can sometimes have fatal consequences on the cow.

Thirdly, and very importantly, there is a serious lack of programme monitoring, evaluation and reporting. This is a major challenge and an obstacle to the greater effectiveness of the Girinka Programme. No baseline studies or surveys were carried out at the beginning of the programme and there is no formal follow up process of beneficiaries. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms are crucial in tracking progress, informing decision making, programme development and research purposes. During my interview with Kagabo, the programme's national director, he informed me that their greatest challenges are the lack of formal impact assessment as well as monitoring and evaluation.

Impact assessments and quantification is our greatest challenge at the moment. No baseline surveys were carried out at the start of the programme and so we don't know for sure how beneficiaries were doing before they received a cow. We have no points of comparison and as a result most of our information is generalized. We have no official monitoring and evaluation mechanism in place although sector officers and vets perform weekly site visits and hold weekly cell meetings where

beneficiaries have the opportunity to raise any issues and concerns (Kagabo, personal interview, 2014 June 20).

Without formal monitoring and evaluation, beneficiaries are underrepresented and disempowered and programme officials are likely to make under-informed decisions. National programme policy related decisions are made at the central level by national programme officials who have limited contact and interaction with local beneficiaries and therefore it is extremely important that strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are put in place at a local level so that policy makers can make informed decisions. The Girinka Programme can be more effective, especially in the reduction of poverty, if strong and formal monitoring and evaluation tools are put in place. However, at the time of my interview with Kagabo, the programme was in the process of creating District Girinka Committees (known as DGCs) which will include sector and district officials, veterinary officers, security organs and community representatives who will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation among other related responsibilities. This is a step in the right direction and if successful, will contribute significantly to the improvement of the programme and its increased effectiveness.

5.6.1 Realisation of The Research Sub-Questions

At the time of this study, beneficiaries of the Girinka programme were living significantly better than they ever have, as a result of owning cattle. Prior to owning cattle through the programme, many beneficiaries had lived their whole lives eating the same meals for lunch and dinner, they struggled to afford education for their children and majority of them had never had access to credit and therefore had been denied opportunities for advancement.

Being a beneficiary of the Girinka Programme significantly contributed to an overall improvement in quality of life through an improvement in holistic nutrition and an increase in diversified food production at a household level, which provided further opportunity for income generation. Ownership of an asset(s) and increased income led to better access to health care services, better access to clean and adequate water for use, access to credit and the ability to afford education for their children. A significant reduction in poverty, as is conceptualised in this study, was evident in the lives of beneficiaries as a result of joining the Girinka Programme.

The ability to afford health care services, education, and access to credit, were major motivating factors for prospective beneficiaries to apply for entry into the Girinka Programme. Prospective beneficiaries believed that access to the above would open even more doors of opportunity for them, significantly improve their quality of life, and more importantly, take them out of poverty.

5.7 Conclusion

The central objective of this study was to investigate the contribution of the Girinka Programme, as a pro-poor growth programme, to a reduction of poverty in Rwanda. This was, in a broader effort, to examine and determine the success of pro-poor growth strategies to poverty reduction. The investigation and analysis of poverty was based on the UN definition of poverty which was largely based on the work of Amartya Sen and was believed to be a more holistic, multidimensional definition of poverty that allowed me to go beyond the conventional quantitative analysis of poverty. The definition includes 19 indicators of poverty, which due to the limited scope of this study, could not all be analysed. Therefore, the following 5 indicators were analysed: nutrition, education, access to health care services, access to water, and access to credit.

All of the beneficiaries (9 out of 9) who were interviewed for this study indicated that the Girinka Programme has in more ways than one led to an improvement in their livelihoods and a reduction in their overall poverty levels. This was evident especially when comparing the living conditions of beneficiaries prior to receiving a cow and their living conditions at the time of the study. It was also evident when comparing the living conditions of non-beneficiaries to the living conditions of current beneficiaries. Overall, the Girinka Programme was found to positively and significantly contribute to a general reduction in poverty through an increase in income from the commercialisation of dairy products and crops, improved nutrition through increased and diversified crop productivity, access to education, increased access to credit, better health and increased access to health care services and also through what the National Director of the programme called “soft factors” (Kagabo, personal interview, 2014 June 20). Owning a cow instilled a sense of self-worth and dignity in its beneficiaries and led to an increase in self-esteem and social status. It also facilitated the healing process for beneficiaries who were dealing with the emotional trauma of genocide. Furthermore, the programme provided opportunities for beneficiaries to improve their present lives, and the present lives of their children and is also playing an important role in enabling families to secure a brighter future for their children through increased access to health care services, better nutrition, education, as well as promoting entrepreneurship and investment at a household level. This programme has empowered beneficiaries personally, socially and economically.

However, just like the ownership of a cow, or any other productive asset, is not in itself sufficient in reducing poverty, access to a school or a clinic does not in itself imply that one can attain an education or can receive medical care when required. It is not enough to build schools or health centres in an attempt to increase access to health care or education if the potential recipients of

these services cannot afford it. Although policies such as free education go a long way in reducing the costs of education, there still remains a majority of the poor who still cannot afford education. Definitions of poverty should be adjusted and expanded to not only include access to schools but more specifically, access to education. The same applies to indicators such as water and health care. This would meaningfully change the way governments' combat poverty, and I believe would have a greater impact on the successful reduction of poverty. A more complete and inclusive definition of poverty, therefore, is critical in determining a more complete and inclusive approach to poverty reduction.

As a pro-poor approach to poverty reduction, the Girinka Programme has led to the promotion of inclusive growth and enabled previously poor beneficiaries to "participate in and benefit from economic activity" (Kakwani and Pernia, 2000) through the generation of income from the sales of dairy products, access to credit, and the creation of small to medium businesses. As an agricultural pro-poor growth programme, it increases productivity through "nutrient-rich animal supply foods" (Randolph et al., 2007) and in so doing contributes to economic growth both at a local and national level. Pro-poor growth together with economic growth and social development are fundamental elements in the successful reduction of poverty (Asian Development Bank, 1999), and one cannot succeed independently. If Rwanda continues to experience steady economic growth, and places additional emphasis on pro-poor growth strategies and policies, it is likely to succeed in reducing poverty even further and faster.

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